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CHAPTERS IN SOCIAL HISTORY

BY

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PREFACE

Social endeavor is fast assuming the nature of a science, and the social worker must be equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge. But a historical background is necessary for a right appreciation of both theory and practice, and is to be sought in social history.

Two methods have been pursued by writers of social history: the first is the presentation of salient movements, and the second is the study of the lives of leaders in social thought. We have adopted the former as more comprehensive, and as giving greater unity to the subject. Of its very nature history treats more immediately of events and epochs than of persons. Perhaps St. Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine Order, has exercised a greater social influence than any other individual from the sixth century of the Christian era to the present time, yet even the most thorough study of his life, if separated from that of his numerous disciples and from the chronicles of monasteries built by them, would present but a very inadequate conception of his social achievements.

In the *Survey*, April 7, 1916, there appeared an article on prison reform in connection with the work of Thomas Mott Osborne. The magazine reproduced a photograph of the well-known reformer wearing a "brank" or a "gibbet cap," an iron used for torturing prisoners. It was stated in the article that this form of punishment was of medieval origin; but after an interchange of six letters the writer of the article was forced to admit that the "brank" originated in Scotland at the end of the sixteenth century. When he was requested to correct his

error, he replied that he would do so if it could be proved that he had " caused substantial injury to anyone."

The incident is not of any great importance except to show the attitude of a certain class of writers who seem willing to make any statement in regard to the social conditions of the Middle Ages. Such authors injure not one person, but millions of people; they injure an age, and are unfair to the people of that age. Moreover, as leaders of thought they do a great injustice to students of our own time who are seeking the truth in regard to social history.

The Middle Ages, like all other ages, had their social evils and problems, the two outstanding problems of that period being leprosy and usury. Both were combated with curative and preventive methods. To follow the subject further in a preface or to attempt an analysis of the conditions of the past would be an unwarranted anticipation of the contents of this book.

Social workers can learn from the past many a lesson which will be useful in interpreting the present. We trust, too, that they will find in this book inspiration for high ideals, and that students of history will be given a further insight into the lives and aspirations of the people.

The references given at the end of the several chapters are not intended as complete bibliographies; still we believe that they will be more than sufficient for a well-rounded knowledge of the subject.

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[2] From the *Heart of Europe*, by Ralph Adams Cram. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Reprinted with the permission of the author and publishers.

[3] From Janssen's *History of the German People*, Vol. II, pp. 187–241. Reprinted with permission of the publishers.

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[1] From *The Medieval Stage*, by E. K. Chambers, Vol. II, cc. 21, 22. Clarendon Press, 1903. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

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[1] From *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, by Francis Aidan Gasquet. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

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CHAPTERS IN SOCIAL HISTORY

CHAPTER I

SLAVERY AND THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL STATE

1. Slavery in pagan civilization. 2. Number of slaves and their work. 3. Moral condition of slaves. 4. Degradation of work. 5. Slavery brought ruin to the Roman Empire. 6. Difficulty which the Church faced. 7. A message of hope. 8. The slave and the master as viewed by the Church. 9. Ennobling manual labor. 10. Legislation of emperors and councils. 11. Attitude of the Church shown in the ceremony of imparting freedom. 12. The effects of the invasion by the northern nations. 13. Some evils of the period. 14. Abolition of slavery due to Christianity. 15. The importance of the movement. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. In the reorganization of the social life of Europe and the transition from the old pagan to the Christian ideals, the first difficulty which presented itself was slavery. During the centuries when Greece and Rome had reached the height of their supremacy, the evils of slavery took ever deeper and deeper root in the very foundation of the national life. Pagan society could not conceive a social condition where there were not slaves. There was no indication that under pagan civilization slavery would have been gradually eradicated or the lot of the slave gradually ameliorated. The emancipation of the slave was the necessary outcome of the ideals of Christianity.

2. By far the greater part of the human race was living in the bondage of slavery in ancient pagan civilization. During the reign of Claudius in Rome (A. D. 50) in the whole of Italy there were about 21,000,000 slaves and 7,000,000 freemen. The consul Gallicanus had 5000 slaves; Hermes, prefect of Rome under Trajan, owned 1500; and a certain Chromatius had 1400 on his estates. St. Melania, who was converted to Christianity, liberated 8000 slaves whom she had inherited with the family estate. Horace, who boasted of his simple life, had several slaves to serve him at his villa. Slaves who had won favor with their master had other slaves given to them.

Slaves not only performed the menial tasks of the estate or household, but certain avocations which are at present highly coveted fell to their lot. They were the teachers and physicians, the artists and sculptors, the tailors and dressmakers, the farmers and horticulturists, the cooks and bankers, the servants, bodyguards, and attendants. The slave was in every part of the Roman household and in every part of the Roman estate. St. Clement of Alexandria mentions some of the duties of slaves: "Men, avoiding working with their own hands and serving themselves, have recourse to slaves, purchasing a great crowd of fine cooks, and of people to set out the table, and of others to divide the meat skillfully into pieces. And the staff of slaves is separated into many divisions. Some labor for their gluttony, carvers and seasoners, and the compounders and makers of sweetmeats and honey cakes and custards; others are occupied with their too numerous clothes; others guard the gold like griffins; others keep the silver and wipe the cups and make ready what is needed to furnish the festive table; others rub down the horses; and a crowd of cupbearers exert themselves in their service, and herds of beautiful boys. . . . And

male and female assistants at the toilet are employed about the ladies — some for the mirrors, some for the headdresses, others for the combs."

3. Slaves had no rights. They were not considered in any way equal to their masters. They could be put to death for the slightest wrong or even at the caprice of the owner, and no one questioned the master's authority. Slaves were sold as were the cattle of the field. It was simply a matter of gain or advantage for the master. If a slave was thought indispensable for certain work, he was retained. If a high price was offered for him, and it seemed a profitable bargain, the change of condition of the slave was not considered. The slave did not marry; he only mated as did the brutes. He had no name other than some designation to distinguish him from his companions. He was fed, for he could not work without food and strength; he was housed, but so were the sheep and oxen; sometimes he was petted, but so were the dogs and peacocks. He was not a man, but just an ordinary chattel; something to be bargained for and sold; something to be worked and used for the emolument or pleasure of the master; something to be cast aside when his days of usefulness were over. Pliny called the slaves "the hopeless ones." Even when slaves were given their liberty after years of faithful duty, their prospects were not bright. They were not admitted to terms of equality with the Romans; they could not follow their former trade, for they had neither material nor a market. Business as we know it did not exist. The rich Romans with their hundreds of slaves made everything needed on their estates. Each household was sufficient for itself, and did not purchase things in the market. Frequently slaves did not accept liberty, for they found no future before them and no means of support.

4. Not only were slaves in the palaces and on the estates of the patricians, but they were likewise at work in producing articles for rent and sale. No freeman could compete with the rich Roman who monopolized all kinds of handicraft and employed only slave labor. Many of the Roman lords became rich traders and opened up warehouses in which to store the output of their estates. Lucullus, a Roman noble, could boast that he had 5000 purple cloaks for rent on state occasions. The poet Martial wrote of a certain rich man: "Your wardrobes are overfull of brilliant robes, your presses are crammed with festive garments without number, you have enough white wool to clothe a whole tribe." When a Roman of limited means wished to give a feast to his friends, he could hire a cook and slave waiters; also musicians and dancers to entertain the guests. Mention is made of a certain Crassus who employed five hundred trained slave artisans and architects and was prepared to submit plans and erect great and noble mansions. Only exceptionally did talent or skill bring honor or recompense to the slaves, and hence the poet Lucian could complain: "If you make yourself a sculptor, you will be only an artisan. Even if you were a Phidias or a Polycletes, it is only your workmanship that all will praise. Among those who see them there will not be a single man of common sense who will desire to resemble you; for, however skillful you may be, you will always pass for an artisan, a vile workman, a man who lives by the labor of his hands." [1]

In this condition of things in pre-Christian civilization, every kind of work was associated with inferiority and degradation. The teacher and the artist were degraded as were the cook and the agriculturist. Slavery was a

[1] Brownlow, pp. 8–10.

curse upon the land; it dragged the human being down to the level of the brute. With slavery as an acknowledged institution, there could be but little progress in social life. Civilization as we now know it could be only gradually introduced as slavery gradually disappeared. The terrible moral degradation of slavery we pass over with the simple statement that slaves were not considered capable of moral ideas. There were exceptions to this infamous condition, just as there were exceptions in the case of certain slaves whose marriage was acknowledged as legitimate.

5. A careful student of the history of Rome does not hesitate to attribute the downfall of the empire to the degradation caused by slavery:

"The barbarians did not ruin Italy. The Romans themselves ruined it. Slavery had made it a waste and depopulated land before a Scythian or a Scandinavian had crossed the Alps.

"When Alaric led the Goths into Italy, even after the conquest of Rome, he saw that he could not sustain his army in the beautiful but desert territory, unless he could also conquer Sicily and Africa, whence alone daily bread could be obtained. His successor was, therefore, easily persuaded to abandon the unproductive region and invade the happier France.

"Attila had no other object than a roving pilgrimage after plunder; and as his cupidity was little excited, and the climate was ungenial, the wild, unlettered Calmuck was easily overawed by the Roman priesthood, and diverted from the indigent Italy to the more prosperous North. Rome still remained an object for plunderers, but none of the barbarians were tempted to make Italy the seat of empire, or Rome a metropolis. Slavery had destroyed the democracy, had destroyed the aristocracy,

had destroyed the empire; and now at last it left the traces of its ruinous power deeply furrowed on the face of nature herself." [1]

6. Into this pagan civilization with its ideas of slavery came Christianity. The disciples of Christ preached the message of the redemption of all men, the common fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. In the beginning the Church could only announce her principles The working programs were left to each age and each country. Patience and forbearance were necessary. Haste would only have evoked a revolution which, like the outburst of Spartacus of old, would have ended in disaster. While bringing the message of freedom, it was imperative to instruct the slaves in the lessons of respect and obedience to masters. No social evil can be corrected at a conference of idealists. The deeper the social wound, the longer does it require to heal it. Slavery was deep-seated; it was a part of the social order. It could not have been disposed of suddenly without destroying the whole fabric of which it was a part. A brief sketch will be of importance here to show the method of the Church in overthrowing the system of slavery.

The first message of Christianity was to the poor. Down in dark and deserted catacombs they were gathered, to learn of the good God who had loved them and had come in human form to bless and save them. He had died for them. He had called them his brothers and the children of the Father in heaven. He had come to lessen their burden and to reward them with a life of everlasting glory. Before God they were the equals of their masters. Nay, more, by their lives they could rise superior to their owners, for God looked to the heart

[1] Blake, *Slavery and the Slave Trade*, p. 68.

and judged not man by his external power or honor. They were not to rise up in rebellion. Christ their God had suffered and died; they could suffer with Him.

7. We find in the words of St. Paul the duties of masters and servants: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of your hearts as to Christ: Not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but, as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With a good will serving as to the Lord and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man shall do, the same shall he receive from the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatenings, knowing that the Lord both of them and you is in heaven; and there is no respect of persons with him." [1]

Again, in the epistle to Philemon the Apostle shows the attitude of the Church towards the slave — even a faithless slave. Philemon had a servant named Onesimus who robbed him and fled to Rome, where he met St. Paul. The Apostle converted him to the faith and sent him back to his master with a letter in his favor:

"I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bands, Onesimus. Who hath been heretofore unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable both to me and thee. Whom I have sent back to thee, and do thou receive him as my own bowels. Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered to me in the bands of the Gospel: But without thy counsel I would do nothing: that thy good deed might not be as it were of necessity, but voluntary. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season from thee, that thou mightest receive him again for ever: Not as a servant,

[1] Eph. vi, 5–10.

but instead of a servant, a most dear brother, especially to me: but how much more to thee both in the flesh and in the Lord? If therefore thou count me a partner, receive him as myself. And if he hath wronged thee in anything or is in thy debt, put that to my account. I Paul have written it with my own hand." [1]

8. This despised community grew in numbers and power. Men and women of the noblest and best families gradually learned of the new religion and were drawn into its membership. Its numbers attracted attention and finally drew upon it the sword and fire of degraded Roman rulers. But whether the Church was left to develop slowly or was tried by the ordeals of persecution, the slave played ever a greater and more conspicuous part in the Christian communities. Slaves were not only admitted to divine service and received into fullest membership; but often, while their masters, as catechumens, were excluded from the most sacred part of the mysteries, their slaves remained to partake in it. St. Cyril of Jerusalem thus addressed the candidates for baptism about the middle of the fourth century: "Be of good courage, O man; the Judge is no respecter of persons. . . . He honors not the learned before the simple, nor the rich before the poor. . . . Though thou be a slave, though thou be poor, be not any whit distressed; He who took the form of a slave despises not slaves. . . . He who brought forth Joseph out of slavery and the dungeon to a kingdom redeems thee also from thy affliction into the kingdom of heaven."

"In the Christian Church," says St. Chrysostom, "all difference is suppressed. The table of the Lord is the same for the rich and the poor, the slave and the free. . . . The munificence of our God has done the same

[1] Phil. 9–19.

honor to rich and poor, slave and free; one common gift is offered to all."

St. Gregory of Nazianzen was equally severe when addressing Christian slave owners: "We are all made of the same dust; we all deduce our origin from the same Creator; tyranny, not nature, has divided us into two parts; I count him a slave who leads a flagitious life, and him free who excels in virtues and integrity. What is a slave, or what is a master, but a sorry distinction of worldly rank? There is one Creator, one law, one judgment for all alike. And when thou art being served by thy slave, remember that he is thy fellow servant. . . . What must slaves do, especially as many as are servants of God? Let them not neglect to bear their master's good-will. A man's disposition makes him a slave or a freeman; and Christ appeared in the form of a slave, and yet was free."

9. Slaves were made priests and bishops, and we have at least one record of a slave who became Pope Callixtus I. St. Blandina, St. Potamiana, and other slaves who suffered and died as martyrs, were venerated upon the altars. The word "slave" or "servus" was never engraved upon a tomb, showing that the despised slave was in death equal to his master.

Then, too, the teaching and practice of the Church restored labor to its rightful place of honor. How well did St. John Chrysostom speak on this subject: "When you see a man who fells the wood, or, rather grimy with soot, who works the iron with his hammer, do not despise him, but rather for that reason admire him. Peter, with his loins girded, dragged the fishing-net even after the resurrection of the Lord. And why say I Peter? For this same Paul, after traversing so many lands and working so many miracles, still continued to sit in his

workshop, sewing skins together, while angels reverenced him and demons trembled before him; and he was not ashamed to say: 'These hands have furnished necessaries to me and to them that were with me.' " When St. John Chrysostom was preaching to his flock on the subject of slavery, he warned them of their duty to free these fellow beings who, like the masters, had put on the freedom of Christ. It was a delicate task which confronted the speaker, but he put forth his sentiments in a tactful way, which pointed out the mind of the Church and still admitted her unwillingness to create a public disaster by a too hasty action in liberating the great army of slaves. "God," he said, "has given us hands and feet that we might not stand in need of slaves. No race of slaves was created at the same time as Adam. Slavery has been the penalty of sin and the consequence of disobedience. But Christ has come and has destroyed it; for in Christ there is neither slave nor free. This is why it is not necessary to have slaves; or if one believes it necessary, have but one, or at the most two. . . . I will not be too exacting. We will allow you to keep a second slave. But if you collect many, you do it not for humanity's sake, but in self-indulgence. If it be out of care of them, I exhort you to occupy none of them in ministering to yourself; but when you have purchased them, and have taught them trades whereby to support themselves, let them go free."

10. Not only was the Church instrumental in freeing the slave, but the Christian emperors from the beginning of their power made laws for his protection and liberation. Constantine could do little more than forbid the crucifixion, branding, and mutilation of slaves. Theodosius enacted more liberal laws. For instance, he forbade any persons who were connected with theaters to possess

Christian slaves. Finally, Justinian, without opposition, was enabled to condemn the whole system of slavery as "a barbarous institution and contrary to natural right." When Constantine the Great in the year 319 wished to bring relief to the helpless and degraded slaves of the empire, he enacted a law which may seem to us heartless and cruel; and yet it was merciful when compared to the laws of earlier Rome: "If any master shall chastise his slave with rods or thongs, or for safe keeping put him in chains, he shall not incur any danger of a criminal charge if his slave die, whether that death take place after few or many days. But let him not use his right beyond moderation, for he is guilty of homicide if he slay him wilfully either with the blow of a club or with stones, and certainly if he use a weapon and inflict a deadly wound; or if he order him to be hanged by a halter, or by a foul mandate have him cast down a precipice. If he have him poisoned, or his body flayed by public tortures, such as tearing open his sides with iron claws, or burning his limbs with red-hot plates; or when his fainting limbs are naked and streaming with gore and blood, add to his very torments by leaving life in him, — almost equalling the cruelties of pitiless barbarians."

The gradual transformation of the slave into a serf can be traced in the councils of the Church. The Council of Rheims in the year 625 enacted that no one should reduce any one to slavery who had been free by birth or emancipation, and that freeborn men who had sold themselves into slavery on account of their poverty were to be liberated as soon as they could pay their debts. The Council of Chalons in the year 650 declared that no slave should be sold beyond the limits of certain kingdoms, that slaves should not pass from Christian to pagan masters, and especially that they should not be sold to

Southern Christian

Jews. During the sixth and seventh centuries the word slave was often used in reference to those who were serfs. The Council of Rouen in the year 630 laid down explicit laws to all landowners that their shepherds and field laborers should have every opportunity to assist at mass on Sundays and festivals. Masters were reminded that their serfs were redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ and that they would be held responsible for the salvation of their subjects. We see still further progress in favor of the serf, who was to be free not only on Sundays but on Saturday afternoons and the afternoons before all festivals. Turning to England, we find the Council of Berkhampstead in the year 697 giving the serf rest on Saturday afternoon under the penalty of a fine of eighty shillings for the owner. Finally the Church gained such power over both lord and serf that any master who required his servant to work on the Lord's day forfeited thirty shillings and all further power over his subject.

11. The whole attitude of the Church towards slavery is shown in the ceremony of imparting freedom. In the old pagan world, when the slave was liberated, his master gave him a stroke upon the cheek, indicating that he still had power over the menial, and that he still held the slave to be his inferior. How different was the official action of imparting freedom under the sanction of the Church! Before the assembled congregation of believers the slave was brought. He was reminded of his dignity as a man and a Christian. Freedom was not given to him, but restored to him. By nature he was always free. Human institutions had erred and deprived him of his liberty; under the guidance of the Church this liberty was restored to him. With his freedom was given the money which he had earned, and his wife and children went with him.

St. Gregory the Great on giving freedom to two slaves addressed them in these pathetic words: "Since our Redeemer, the Author of all creation, has been graciously pleased to assume our human flesh, in order that He might by the grace of His divinity break the bonds of servitude in which we were held captive, and restore us to our original liberty, so it is a salutary act when men, whom at birth nature brought forth free, and whom the law of nations has put under the yoke of servitude, are restored by the beneficence of their liberator to that liberty in which they were born. And therefore moved by the instinct of piety and the consideration of the matter itself, you, Montana and Thomas, we make free from this day forward, and Roman citizens, and we relinquish all your peculium."

When bishops or abbots came into possession of lands on which there were slaves, they were admonished not only to provide for their spiritual welfare, but on finding them worthy of freedom to bestow upon them what was necessary for the establishment of a home. Thus we find it decreed in the Council of Agde (544): "If the bishop shall have granted freedom to any of the slaves who have well deserved it, this synod has decreed that the freedom so conferred shall be respected by his successors, together with what their emancipator granted them on giving them freedom, and this we prescribe shall be limited to twenty soldi (sixty-five dollars) in money, and a small plot of land, a cottage, or a homestead."

12. By the gradual application of the principle of equality, slavery slowly gave way under the benign action of the Church. Before the dawn of the fifth century the great change had been effected; and while there were

instances of slavery, still as an institution it had ceased to exist in Christian Europe.

In the meanwhile there developed that great unsuspected and irresistible power known in history as the Migration of Nations. The Huns, the Vandals, the Goths, and other tribes swept down from the north and destroyed the Roman Empire. In the great catastrophe both slave and freeman perished. The invaders put the yoke of servitude upon the vanquished, and the great work of the Church in liberating the slaves was largely undone. But again the work went on; and when Charlemagne was crowned emperor in the year 800, slavery as an institution had nearly ceased to exist.

We have cited instances where the slave was given his immediate freedom; but generally the change was a gradual one, and the slave usually became a serf. Those who criticize serfdom or the great feudal system as it existed in Europe in the early Middle Ages ignore the fact that this slow transformation was more productive of good than would have been the sudden freedom given to whole groups of people. It is interesting to trace this gradual evolution of the slave into a serf and the serf into the freeman of Europe.

13. While the Church was ever endeavoring to curb the haughty and often cruel lords, she was not always successful in her efforts; frequently, too, she failed in her endeavors to mitigate the sufferings of the oppressed. St. Gregory of Tours (d. 594) relates an instance of a brutal lord who took pleasure in torturing his slaves. Two of them, after vainly endeavoring to secure his permission to marry, were united in matrimony against his protests and to escape his vengeance took refuge in a church. The master came to the priest and asked to have the two refugees removed from the altar, promising to

forgive them. But the priest, who suspected the designs of the cruel lord, made him swear with his hand upon the Bible that he would do them no harm and would not separate them. As soon as the tyrant had them in his possession, he dug a deep trench and placed in it a hollow tree. Into the cavity he forced the husband and the wife and then refilled the trench. On hearing of the foul deed, the priest rushed to the spot and reproached the master for his cruelty and the violation of his oath; but the brutal man replied that he had only taken the most effectual means of keeping the two united. At the command of the priest the soil was quickly removed and the husband was saved, but the wife in the meantime had died of suffocation.

Instances of this kind, although probably not as brutal, could be multiplied many times. While such incidents point out the cruelties of many of the barons, whose rapacious and vindictive lives the Church had not yet been able to correct, they also prove that the Church was ever the protector of the oppressed, and that the ministers of God, even at the risk of their own lives, were not afraid to rebuke cruel masters. It must be remembered, too, in recording instances of this nature, that such acts of violence made a lasting impression upon eye witnesses and were remembered, while the good deeds and orderly lives of just and noble lords passed unnoticed and unrecorded. We do not judge a city or a nation by the acts of violence and murder which are given publicity in our daily press. It is a sad comment upon poor human nature that we are inclined to take an interest in the morbid and murderous deeds of a few, while we pass by the upright lives of the many without even a reflection.

Granting, then, that there were many evils, and that

there were deeds of violence and bloodshed, no one can deny that the Church was ever exercising a benign influence upon the invading nations of Europe. What would have been the outcome of this period of history without the restraining power of Christianity? Wars would have followed wars, and internecine conflicts would have all but depopulated the land; and other wandering tribes from the East would have made the countries of Europe as desolate and unpopulated as the shores of northern Africa.

As the conversion of Europe went on, the sons of the noblest families of the Franks and other nations laid aside their implements of war and revenge and donned the coarse habit of the monk. The son of the lord and the son of the serf prayed in the same chapel, sang in the same choir, and toiled together in field, swamp, and forest. Here was a true democracy which bent the pride of the mighty and exalted the humble; here was an equality and brotherhood which broke down the false barriers of human creation and made all equal before God and man. It is hard to overestimate its value in building up that Christian social order of which we are the inheritors.

14. "The Christian religion has tended to raise the peoples affected by it to the commanding place they have come to occupy in the world. Let us see how this remarkable development has proceeded. The first great epoch in the history of this process was that which marked the extinction of slavery. There is scarcely any one feature of our modern civilization of greater significance to the evolutionist than the absence of this institution. The abolition of slavery has been one of the greatest strides forward ever taken by the race. The consequences, direct and indirect, have been immense,

and even now we habitually underrate rather than overrate its effect and importance. Had the institution continued after the break-up of the Roman Empire, modern civilization would never have been born; we would still be living in a world with the fetters of militancy hopelessly riveted upon us; social freedom and equality would have been unknown; trade, commerce and manufactures as they now exist could never have been developed; and the few engaged in such occupations would have been despised.

"We are apt to consider the abolition of slavery as the result of an intellectual movement. But he would be a bold man who, with a clear apprehension of the forces that have been at work, would undertake to prove that slavery was abolished through the march of the intellect. The two doctrines which contributed most to producing the extinction of slavery were the doctrine of salvation and the doctrine of the equality of man before the Deity, both being essentially ultra-rational. The doctrine of salvation, in particular, proved at an early stage to be one of the most powerful solvents ever applied to the mind of man. The immense and incalculable importance that the welfare of even the meanest creature acquired for his soul's sake possessed an unusual social significance. It tended from the beginning to weaken the degrading class distinction, and it immediately raised even the slave to a position of native dignity. The conception of the equality of man before the Deity was also of profound importance, and in an even wider sense. The theoretical conception to which it gave rise, that all men are born equal — an assumption which, it must be remembered, receives no sanction from science or experience — has been throughout one of the most characteristic products of our civilization, and it has played a

large part in that process of expansion through which the western peoples have passed." [1]

15. The gradual passage of the greater part of mankind from slavery to serfdom and from serfdom to liberty forms an all-important chapter in the history of social reform. Petty legislation in our own day, which is regarded as an advance for the workman, cannot compare with that great foundation of our Christian civilization and democracy. Through all the complex workings of the transition there were undoubtedly many evils; for it was no easy task to curb the lusts and passions of pagan peoples or to tame the lawless tribes which swept through Europe. We are not surprised that there were abuses; we rather wonder at the results which were accomplished. Above all do we recall with sorrow that, when slavery had been destroyed, Christian nations disregarded the teachings of the Church and again enslaved their fellow men.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Compare the article on slavery in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* with the article in some other encyclopedia.
2. Was slavery increasing among the civilized nations at the time of Christ?
3. How did slavery degrade labor?
4. What work did slaves do? What was their probable number?
5. Why did not slavery disappear sooner?
6. Why did Christ not announce the immediate cessation of slavery?
7. Explain the difference between a program and a principle in eradicating slavery.
8. Monasteries owned slaves. Why did they not free the slaves at once?
9. What was the difference between the condition of slaves in pagan and Christian times?

[1] *Social Evolution*, Benjamin Kidd, p. 178.

10. Have we reason to believe that slavery would have disappeared by civil legislation among pagan nations?

11. What was the effect of the Migration of Nations on slavery?

12. A member of the class should read the opening chapters in *Fabiola* and prepare a paper on the treatment of slaves, especially of female slaves.

13. Another member of the class should read the life of St. Melania and prepare a paper on the condition of pagan society.

14. Material for other papers will be found in: *The Social Results of Christianity, Credentials of Christianity*, etc.

15. Suggested topics for papers and discussions are: (*a*) the family in pagan and Christian civilization, (*b*) the laboring classes in pagan and Christian civilization, (*c*) the moral impotence of paganism, (*d*) brotherly love as an incentive in Christian civilization, (*e*) woman's debt to Christianity, etc.

16. What about the disgrace of the Christian nations which in modern time perpetuated slavery?

17. What part did Spain and Portugal play in the modern slave evil?

18. What did Las Casas and St. Peter Claver do for the slaves of South America?

19. Did the Spanish government generally protect the slaves against the abuses of cruel owners?

20. What was the influence of the New England States in introducing slavery into the United States?

21. Who was Cardinal Lavigerie?

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CHAPTER II

THROUGH SERFDOM TO FREEDOM

1. From slavery to serfdom. 2. Beginning of feudalism. 3. Primitive life. 4. Duties of a faithful overseer. 5. Appeal to moral power. 6. Extension of the feudal system. 7. The condition of the serfs. 8. An ideal picture of the times. 9. Difficulties with the monasteries. 10. The beginning of towns and cities. Growth of democracy. 11. Progress in the thirteenth century. 12. The moral power of the Church. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. Complete freedom did not come to the slaves of the Roman Empire, or of the invading nations, by any one enactment or at any one time; nor did one generation witness the change. The process was gradual and often interrupted. The system of slavery slowly evolved into the system of serfdom; and no exact date can be assigned to the transition. Progress was steady during the fifth and sixth centuries, and in the beginning of the ninth century serfdom was all but universal throughout the dominion of Charlemagne. However, it would be a false interpretation to conclude that serfdom, in any fixed form, remained for a long time as a recognized institution. It marked a stage of social progress; it was a period of transformation through which millions of people passed from the condition of slavery to that of freedom. It would have accomplished little had not the Church by her teachings and admonitions checked and subdued the proud lord, and taught patience and resignation to the serf.

Perhaps at no period do we find serfdom in a more

prosperous condition than under the rule of Charlemagne. He himself possessed vast estates of which, fortunately, we have an accurate account. On each of these estates Charlemagne appointed a prudent overseer and gave him minute directions for the management of the serfs and the upkeep of the property. We have the actual inventory of the buildings, the stock, and the seeds for planting. It is remarkable how this great king found time to legislate for his estates, to provide skilled artisans, to place upon the premises experienced husbandmen, and to secure monks for the instruction and education of the people.

2. But not all rulers of Europe had the prudence and firmness of Charlemagne. Where powerful lords were in possession of the estates, they organized their vassals into well-trained armies and defied their king. On their estates they built large and magnificent castles, formed little kingdoms of their own, and paid but slight homage to the acknowledged rulers. This action of the lords gave rise to the feudal system, which had such a marked influence on medieval civilization. The condition of the serfs under the feudal lords depended entirely on the good will of the master. If he were proud and ambitious, he could withdraw his serfs from the fields and employ them for most of the time as soldiers; if he needed large funds for his ambitious exploits, he could grind down his subjects and demand the greater part of their services to till his own fields and work in his own forests.

3. Life during those primitive days was very simple. Not only the serfs but their masters depended for food upon their fields and herds. Both in England and on the continent the serfs were obliged to allow a half or a third of the estate allotted to them to lie fallow each year.

This alternation of crops was worked out with accuracy and prevented deterioration of the soil. Clothing was made of hides and of rough cloth woven from flax raised on the estates. From the forest and waste lands came the fuel. There were few luxuries. Honey took the place of sugar. Salt, which could not be produced on many of the estates of the interior, was imported from the seashore, and was often the principal object sought in travel and bartering.

There were large strips of meadow land set aside for common pasturage, and during the winter the cattle wandered freely over the grazing and stubble fields; but there were laws like the following for private meadow lands and for the protection of the crops from the neighbor's cattle: "If serfs have a common meadow or other partable land to fence, and some have fenced their part, some have not, and cattle stray in and eat up their common corn or grass, let those who own the gap compensate to the others, who have fenced their part, the damage which there may be done, and let them demand such justice on the cattle as it may be right. But if there be a beast which breaks hedges and goes in everywhere, and he who owns it will not or cannot restrain it, let him who finds it in his field take it and slay it, and let the owner take its skin and flesh, and forfeit the rest."

The implements of husbandry were often primitive. Plows were made of wood, and were drawn by six or eight oxen; and even then they scarcely more than scraped the surface of the ground. The crops, therefore, were not remunerative; and six bushels of wheat, rye, or barley to an acre was considered a good harvest. Hay for feeding the cattle during the winter was a most important product of the farm; the smaller vegetables, such as turnips,

cabbages, and carrots, were raised in the gardens near the little homes.

4. Professor Cunningham quotes an interesting old document in which are set forth the duties of a reeve or an overseer, and we are given a detailed account of the management of an estate in England in the early part of the eleventh century. The author of this document, as is the case with so many records of these early times, is not known; and we are left to conjecture whether these are the words of some faithful manager or of some lord of the manor who wished to lay down precise instructions for a reeve:

"The sagacious reeve ought to know both the lord's land right and the folk rights, even as the counselors of olden days have determined; and the season of every crop that pertains to a homestead; since in many districts the farmwork is earlier than in others; that is, ploughing time is earlier, the season for mowing is earlier, and so likewise is the winter pasturing, and every other kind of husbandry. Let him who holds such office take heed that he guard and further every work according as is best for it; and he must act with regard to it as the weather directs him. He ought prudently to consider and diligently to look into all the things that may be for his lord's advantage.

"He can ever be finding out something to be useful, and be thinking of useful things to assist him. However, it is most desirable for him to search out how he may promote the estate by farming, when the right time for it comes round. In May and June and July one may harrow, carry out manure, set up sheep hurdles, shear sheep, build up, repair, hedge, build with timber, cut wood, weed, make folds, and construct a fish weir and a mill. In August and September and October one may

reap and mow, gather home many crops, thatch them and cover them over, and cleanse the folds, prepare cattle sheds and also shelters ere too severe a winter come to the farm; and also diligently prepare the soil. In winter one should plough, and in severe frosts cleave timber, make an orchard, and do many affairs indoors; thresh, cleave wood, put the cattle in stalls and the swine in pigsties, set up a stove on the threshing floor — for an oven and kiln and many things are necessary on a farm — and moreover provide a henroost. In spring one should plough and graft, sow beans, set a vineyard, make ditches, hew wood for a wild-deer fence; and soon after that, if the weather permit, set madder, sow flaxseed, plant a garden, and do many things which I cannot fully enumerate that a good steward ought to provide.

"He can always find something on the manor to improve; he need not be idle when he is in it; he can keep the house in order, set it to rights and clean it; and set hedges along the drains, mend the breaches in the dikes, repair the hedges, root up weeds, lay planks between the houses, make tables and benches, provide horse stalls, scour the floor; or let him think of something that may be useful.

"He should provide many tools for the homestead and get many implements for the buildings; for instance, an axe, adze, awl, plane, saw, auger, mattock, share, coulter; and also a scythe, sickle, weed hook, spade, shovel, barrow, rake, fork, ladder, horse comb and shears, fire tongs, weighing scales, and many spinning implements, such as flax threads, spindle, reel, yarn winder, weaver's beams, press, comb, carding tool, woof, wool comb, roller, shuttle, seam pegs, shears, needle, slickstone. And if he has skilled workmen, he should provide them with tools. As for the millwright, shoemaker,

plumber, and other artisans, each work itself shews what is necessary for each; there is no man that can enumerate all the tools that one ought to have.

"One ought to have coverings for wains, ploughing gear, harrowing tackle, and many things that I cannot now name; as well as a measure, and awl, and a flail for the threshing floor, and many implements besides, as a caldron, leaden vessel, kettle, ladle, pan, crock, firedog, dishes, bowls with handles, tubs, buckets, a churn, cheese vat, bags, baskets, crates, bushels, sieves, seed basket, wire sieve, hair sieve, winnowing fans, troughs, ashwood pails, hives, honey bins, beer barrels, bathing tub, bowls, dishes, vessels, cups, strainers, candlesticks, saltcellars, spoon case, pepper horn, chest, money box, yeast box, seats, footstools, chairs, basins, lamp, lantern, leathern bottles, box for resin (soap), comb, iron, bin, rack for fodder, fire guard, meal ark, oil flasks, oven rake, dung shovel.

"It is toilsome to recount all that he who holds this office ought to think of; he ought never to neglect anything that may prove useful, not even a mousetrap, nor even, what is less, a peg for a hasp. Many things are needful for a faithful reeve of a household and for a temperate guardian of men. I have declared all as well as I could; let him who knows better declare more than this." [1]

5. A close study of the above duties of the reeve or overseer will convince one that fidelity played an important part in the dealings of the serf with his immediate superior, and of the steward with his vassal. Some writers

[1] *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, by William Cunningham, pp. 373-375. On succeeding pages are given records of several manors, with the names of the serfs, the number of acres which each held, and the special duty or work which was demanded of each serf.

of the period are prone to depict it as one of utter lawlessness in which only brute force kept the serfs in subjugation to their masters; but the conscientious fulfilment of duty, as set forth in this quaint document, was a greater power than physical force. This fidelity to labor and this regard for those in power were no doubt the results of the teaching of the Church, which ever inculcated lessons of obedience and contentment. If the life of the serf was hard, its harshness was mitigated by the example of the monks and especially by the example of the sons and daughters of the nobility, who often put aside their social rank and as members of religious communities gave themselves to a life of toil and prayer.

This old document points out the care with which tools were handled and how tools were prized. The list that is given above is not complete, because there were instruments enumerated the very purpose of which has been forgotten. The existence of so many tools in the manorial estates points to the fact that there must have been many skilled artisans and husbandmen; and we find there the beginning of the artistic work which later led to the erection of the wonderful churches of Medieval Europe. Where so many knew how to handle tools — and there were so many days when the serfs were free to devote their time to personal interests, it is probable that they would furnish their little homes with some of the conveniencies of life, as they understood them.

6. For more than a century after the death of Charlemagne there was a period of disorder, when powerful lords were able to set aside the laws of the land and to ignore the mandates of the king. In England, in the middle of the twelfth century and during the reign of King Stephen, lawlessness was all but universal. In order to keep the lords in check they were given power

over great tracts of land. They in turn divided their immense territories among barons and counts who became vassals of the lords. This landed property or estate was called a fief or feud; and the system by which these estates were transferred was known as feudalism. There were types of feudalism before the time of Charlemagne, but the system took definite form during the ninth century, reached its highest state of perfection in the thirteenth, after which it gradually declined; although it was found in Russia until the middle of the last century.

Throughout middle Europe during this period there were certain fairly prosperous barons and counts who held hereditary possessions called alodial lands, and whose titles were acknowledged by the king and lords. Often these barons and counts entered into contracts with more powerful neighbors and became their vassals. It happened, too, that vassals subdivided their lands and turned them over to subvassals, so that the great estates were divided and subdivided many times. The duty of the vassal was to assist his lord in time of war, and to appear at court for its sessions. In these assemblies he not only gave his advice, but also rendered judgment in case of dispute between vassals and their serfs, or between the lord and his subjects.

7. During the early period of the feudal system there was little money as a means of exchange or barter, and the taxes were paid through military service or by work on the great estates. The vassals of the lords did not till the soil, but sublet it to lower classes of people known as serfs and villeins, the latter being free to leave the service of their master. Often there was little distinction between the serf and the villein; and a serf under a gentle master was better off than a villein under one who was

Vassal Paying Homage to His Lord — Thirteenth Century

Interior of Castle — Middle Ages

Feast in Castle — Thirteenth Century

harsh. While the villein was not tied to any estate, he often experienced difficulty in attaching himself to any other landholder; and he was therefore in practice obliged to stay with his lord even though his lot was a hard one.

The serfs lived in hamlets, and went out each morning to till their own little fields or to work on the estates of the master. In this respect their lives were not as isolated as were those of the early American settlers; nor were they cut off from communication with their fellow beings, as are many of the farmers who live on large holdings or ranches in our country. Their system much resembled that of the farmer in Spain at present; he lives in a small village and tills his farm, which is often some distance away.

In this hamlet of the serfs there was a church, and often a school where the children received at least the elements of an education. Near the church was the graveyard, called God's Acre. At the end of the village was the smithy, and at some suitable location a common mill.

The houses in which the serfs lived were low and narrow, and were made of wood or clay, with roofs of turf. Some of them were without windows or chimneys. The houses were generally built along a single narrow and crooked street; and around each house there was a garden, and in the rear of the garden a barn. Frequently bread for the community was baked at a common bakery owned by the lord of the estate. Much of the other cooking was done in outdoor ovens not unlike those used by the native Indians in New Mexico at present. Only during the very coldest weather would it be necessary to build a fire in the dwellings.

Professor Cunningham, a careful student of medieval life, is of the opinion that the serf of the Middle Ages was

as contented as the unskilled laborer of the present day; that his table was better provided and his social enjoyments frequently more elevating: "A dwelling with an earthen floor, with no carpet, and in which there was hardly any furniture, where meat was served on spits for want of earthenware plates, and there was no glass for drinking out of, would seem to imply the lowest depths of squalid poverty; but royal palaces were little better provided, and well-to-do burgesses lived in some such fashion at the end of the thirteenth century. As a matter of fact, life in the Middle Ages was far more social than it is now; the churches and the halls were the places they frequented; occasional pageants provided them with instruction and amusement; there was little privacy, and hardly any attention was given to private comfort. This is one of the chief difficulties which confront us if we try to compare the condition of the people in different ages. If we merely consider what he could get to eat, the medieval laborer was often better off than the unskilled laborer of the present day; but he seems to have been worse housed and worse clad. After all, in regard to all such comparisons we must remember that the life is more than the meat; it is probable that a medieval workman who awoke in the present generation would greatly miss the social gatherings in which he had taken part, and that if a modern artisan could be transplanted into the thirteenth century he would find little to compensate him for the loss of his tea, his newspaper, and his pipe." [1]

8. Abbot Snow, too, has given us a picture of the life of a serf:

"The condition of the serf, or villein as he was called, varied according to the amount of service and the harsh-

[1] *Id.* p. 299.

ness of its exaction. The lord retained a part of the domain under his own cultivation, and the remainder was partly let to freemen and partly entrusted in allotments to serfs. In England a strip of half an acre was the unit, and the serf held a greater or lesser number. He had a house, with sheds for his pigs and cattle. It was a home; he could marry at his own choice within the domain, and the children were not separated from him, but they belonged to the land. The size of the holding determined the number of days on which he worked on the lord's farm without wage. A serf who held thirty acres owed him about a hundred and twenty-five days, and on these he went with his implements, horses, or oxen to the steward, who instructed him to work at the hay, corn, vineyard, etc. His wife looked to the poultry and eggs.

"For the rest of the year he could till his own holding or work on hire for payment. The law gave him no redress against his master, but a body of customs grew up which protected him in the kind and amount of service. He had a church and a priest in the village, and a school for his children if he lived near a monastery. In spite of giving half his labor without wage, the condition of a serf under a generous and humane lord would not be intolerable; it was a great advance in comfort on the state of slavery, yet an exacting lord had much scope for oppression and tyranny, for the serf had no remedy. In addition to the labor dues, the lord often imposed taxes on the serfs on various pretexts; tolls were exacted for roads, fairs, and markets; the peasant was bound to have his corn ground at the lord's mill, his grapes crushed at the lord's winepress, his bread baked in the lord's oven; all, of course, for a charge. The lord had exclusive right of sport, and fines and other exactions were inflicted.

In lawless times the serf enjoyed the protection of his lord, but in peaceful days the exactions became the more galling because the peasant received no return for his payment or services. In England, at the time of the eleventh century, the serfs, including villeins and cottiers, comprised two-thirds of the population." [1]

9. The little clusters of hamlets on the large estates often developed into prosperous villages and afterwards into commercial cities. Very frequently the monastic property, because of its great importance, stood in the very center of the great channels of commerce. In the beginning this monastic property was of little value. Centuries of work on the part of the monks had leveled hills and filled up swamps and morasses. Some idea of the riches which came to the local monasteries with the improvement of the land can be gathered from the fact that in the twelfth century over one hundred of them carried on a lucrative wool trade with the merchants of Florence. People, however, did not take the arduous work of the monks into consideration and often looked with envious eyes on the rich estates and magnificent buildings of the religious orders. Frequently the local abbot controlled a part of the real estate occupied by the growing cities and collected the usual rent from the dwellers. This power of the abbeys was at times resented by the citizens and resulted in angry disputes, and even in open contentions and loss of life. Such instances, however, were exceptions in the peaceful lives of the monks and the people. It was a time when a common faith bound all together, and people understood what they owed to the Church and to the monasteries.

[1] *The Church and Labor*, a pamphlet, by Right Reverend Abbot Snow, O. S. B. Catholic Truth Society, 69 Southwark Bridge Road, S. E., London.

History repeats itself. In Montreal today many of the finest locations are in the possession of the Church; and this is resented by people who, however, think it justifiable for property of greater value to come as the inheritance of private families. In the Philippines the monks, by centuries of patient toil, turned the jungle into rich sugar plantations, only to be reviled by a thoughtless age for what they had achieved.

10. The grouping of the serfs together in small hamlets gave them a power which could never have come to them had they lived isolated on their little holdings. As the hamlets developed into towns and villages and later into commercial cities, the serfs acted as a unit. They followed the same system of collective bargaining which the modern labor union utilizes at present. Few serfs went singly to their lords to barter for their full freedom. They went as a body and secured their release either by representation or by the payment of an amount of money. The free towns or cities which had developed from humble hamlets in time became powerful organizations. Within them the wonderful guilds developed, and a spirit of democracy and freedom which anticipated by centuries the democracies of modern times.

In the development of the hamlet into the village or city, the serfs who possessed some mechanical ingenuity formed the nucleus of the rising guild system. The advancement in artistic skill was rapid, and the sons of the despised serfs became the builders of the great cathedrals. In the growth of towns the trading interest exercised the greatest influence; and those centers rose to importance which commanded favorable positions for a supply of raw material and for an interchange of the finished product.

Then, too, as towns grew in importance they became

self-assertive and wished to throw off all dues which had been imposed upon them by former owners, either lay or clerical. So anxious were the citizens in these villages and cities to become free, that they often made great sacrifices to collect a stipulated amount and to buy their freedom from prince or abbot. The thirteenth century was a period, too, when large areas were being laid out with new streets, which formed additions to old towns, while in other places new towns were being deliberately planted.

In studying these new medieval cities one is reminded that their interests were altogether of a local character. Few cities thought of a national prosperity of which they were a part, and, although their trade brought them in touch with other centers and even with foreign countries, they learned little from this relationship that would assist them to gain a national viewpoint. Most of the regulations of the towns and cities were intended to develop and protect local business.

11. Of the thirteenth century as a period of the growth of towns and cities and an era of prosperity, Cunningham wrote:

"The end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century may be taken as the culminating point of a long period of steady and solid progress. The towns, which were the centers of commercial life, were prospering greatly, and many of them had secured full powers of self-government; their vigorous young life was free to shape itself in the forms and institutions that seemed most favorable in the circumstances of the time. So much attention had been given to the good government of the country generally that intercommunication was more easy and commerce more secure; while it had not yet advanced so far as to render the guild merchants and kindred

organizations in each town needless, and therefore restrictive, institutions. Municipal regulations were not sensibly weakened, because they were reinforced and their scope extended by parliamentary authority. So far both these powers were working harmoniously on the whole, and there were admirable social facilities for commercial and industrial progress.

"We have ample evidence that this progress was real, and was generally diffused throughout the country. All sorts of arts were cultivated with extraordinary success in the time of Edward I. The monuments of the twelfth century seem to be more substantial, though their apparent massiveness has sometimes concealed grave structural defects, but there is a grace and refinement about the choir of Lincoln and the nave of York to which the earlier buildings can make no claim. Nor was architecture the only art these men cultivated with success; the west front of Wells shows us their sculpture; the seven sisters at York are specimens of their glass paintings; their metal work was excellent and their bell foundries unrivaled, and their embroidery was celebrated all over Europe.

"There is hardly any token of general prosperity on which we may rely with more confidence than the fact that many people are able and willing to expend money in building; and the buildings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were not merely ecclesiastical. The great fortresses which Edward I erected in Wales are interesting illustrations of the military engineering of the day, and show what pains the king took to render the principality secure and orderly. The improved system of estate management and account which had come into vogue under Henry III appears to have borne fruit in many rural districts, for manorial halls were erected on the domains, and massive stone barns began to supersede

the wooden erections, of which a few examples still survive. The reconstruction of London in masonry was going on, and free towns were being laid out on the most approved principles. In town and country alike building was proceeding apace, and better provision was being made for all sorts of different purposes — ecclesiastical or military, rural or urban. Especially we find that attention was directed to the improvement of communications between different parts of the country, and bridges were repaired or constructed in many places. This is in itself an indication of commercial activity." [1]

12. In England the scourge of the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century brought the already weakening feudalism to a speedy termination. Labor became so scarce and was in such demand that laborers could make their own terms, and what remained of the system of serfdom passed into the modern system of tenantry or complete ownership.

All through the changes of these centuries there was a power, often an unseen power, at work for the progress of struggling humanity. That power was the Church. But the Church was, and is, a society; and like all societies worked through human instrumentality. The principal means by which the Church worked, especially in converting the invading nations of Europe and laying the foundation of a new social order, were the monastic institutions. The methods and achievements of monasticism will be studied in the following two chapters.

[1] *Id.* pp. 293-294.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Read the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on feudalism and the article on the same subject in some other encyclopedia.
2. Was serfdom a natural transition from slavery to freedom?
3. Was serfdom a necessary part of feudalism?
4. What were some of the abuses of serfdom?
5. How did the Church exercise a moral power on the serf and on the master?
6. Point out the power of example on the part of those of the nobility who embraced the religious life.
7. Was it unjust or unbecoming for the abbots to be feudal lords?
8. Did the Migration of Nations hasten the change of slavery to serfdom?
9. What would have been the effect of an immediate change from slavery to freedom?
10. Do you think that the lives of the serfs were dull?
11. Were the serfs generally contented with their condition?
12. Are our American farmers lonesome owing to their isolated condition?
13. Does the wife of the American farmer find her life tedious and depressing?
14. Travelers tell us that the Mexican peons are contented with their condition. Do you think that their lives in any way resemble those of the serfs?
15. Would it have been better for the negro to have got his freedom by degrees?
16. The Doomsday book is one of the most interesting and valuable documents of the Middle Ages (1080). It was prepared by the order of William the Conqueror, who wished to acquaint himself with the resources of the country which had come into his possession. It is a minute survey, carefully planned and carried out, and fortunately preserved to our day. Let a student prepare a paper on this subject.
17. Let one of the members of the class prepare a paper on the social effects of the Truce of God, and one on the social effects of the Migration of Nations.
18. Let other students prepare papers on the social effects of the Crusades: (*a*) unification of the Christian nations, (*b*) encouragement of road building, (*c*) promotion of fairs, (*d*) opportunities for commerce, etc.

19. The redemption of Christian captives was a recognized social need of the time. St. John of Matha and St. Peter of Nolasco were the principal promoters of the work. Let members of the class write papers on these two saints and on the movement.

20. It will be interesting for some students to prepare papers on medieval cities, as Augsburg, Nuremberg, etc.; and on such cities of England as Norwich and York.

21. Read *Ivanhoe* for a picture of feudal times; also *The Black Arrow*, by Robert Louis Stevenson.

References

The references are the same as in Chapter I.

CHAPTER III

LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER IN EUROPE

1. The Church and the new social order. 2. Why monks were chosen. 3. The problem. 4. The survey. 5. The power of example. 6. System in the work. 7. Remarkable success. 8. The ingratitude of our age. 9. Two sources of the new social order of Europe. 10. Benedict and Columbanus. 11. Beginning of cities; useful arts. 12. Sanctification of work. 13. Testimony of Montalembert. 14. Mission work in the United States — a comparison. 15. The Irish monks. The rule of St. Benedict. 16. Ignoring the source of the social order in Europe. 17. Conclusion. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. The object of our present study is to set forth some of the characteristic social movements and epochs of Christian civilization. Our social inheritance is derived from the early centuries of Christianity, for Christianity evolved a new social order. How was this new social order brought about? Was it the work of capable politicians who saved and handed on to posterity what was best of the tottering Roman Empire? The answer is that the whole of pagan civilization was so corrupt that there did not remain sufficient virtue even to be a nucleus of a new social life. It was better for the old to perish. What good there was would have been vitiated by a corrupt state and a more corrupt social life. Did the leaders of the nations which crushed Rome come with any constructive program? They were but irresistible destroyers who knew not the value of the things which perished before their eyes. They knew not how to build

or rebuild. They were restless and roaming warriors, and their only object was to seize for themselves what others had garnered. And yet, those nations which destroyed the old pagan civilization of Rome were a tractable people, ready to learn from those whom they had conquered. It was providential for them that the Church had come into a position of power. The Church, and she alone, saved Europe and gave to the wandering nations a Christian civilization and a new social order.

2. But the Church, like every other society, must work through the instrumentality of men. Whom did the Church send as her messengers? She sent the monks. Her great prelates were few, and were needed in centers where Christianity had found a footing. The secular clergy, too, were not free to leave their parishes and spiritual charges to seek for further conquests for Christ. But the monk was held by no such bonds, and his life of religious discipline especially prepared him for the work of a missionary. The monk gave a new social life to Europe; a Christian social life, a social order whose inheritance is ours. We would not conceal the fact that there were social disorders in the period and movements of which we treat. It was no simple task to change and mold the lives and customs of nations; and at times both rulers and people rose in rebellion against the pure teachings of the Gospel; at times human passion prevailed even when the mind was convinced.

The primary object of the monks was the conversion of the new nations of Europe to the teachings of Christianity. They labored for the salvation of the souls of men; but in so laboring they brought about a Christian civilization, Christian states, and a more perfect social order.

No social movements of our time can measure up to

Thirteenth Century Houses, France

the results of monastic achievements. Upon these achievements depended the social and political status of Europe for the next thousand years.

3. It must be noted in the first place that the monks faced a problem of the greatest difficulty. We find it hard at times to get at the bottom of a single social problem. They faced a multiplicity of problems; they undertook to change the entire character of many nations. They did not meet a people who were dependent on them, but they met conquering nations; nations that were proud, nations whose migratory lives made any work of civilization difficult. We have only to recall how slow has been the progress of our government in working with the American Indian. In some of the deep gulches of the mountains of the West may be seen today stoves and plows of the latest pattern. They were given to the Indian in hope that he might learn to use them. He did use them for a while, but when the restless spirit of change came upon him he started forth to seek a new home. In his wagon he put the plow and the stove; but when later they became too heavy for the passage through the mountain defile they were cast into the ravine and forgotten. It requires patient work, not for one generation but for many, to bring about a change in the habits of people. The monks, then, who undertook to instruct the wandering nations of the North and to induce them to live in permanent settlement, faced a most difficult problem.

4. The work was begun in every instance with a thorough survey. Unaccompanied by the secular arm or military power, the monks went out to investigate the best method of dealing with the new nations of Europe. It was not a hasty visit or a superficial survey that they made. For years and years they lived with those

whom they would convert. They mastered their language and ministered to their wants. Often they were despised; often they saw their comrades perish of hardship and want; often their companions suffered death at the hands of those whom they had come to bless. But despite all difficulties and hardships and in the very face of death the monks remained at their post. They studied the wants of the people whom they would win to the Christian life and simplified the work of those who were to come after them. It was only by these long years of patient study and investigation that they came to know the character of the people. By their patient endurance they merited popular favor and laid the foundation for that work which was to go on until the entire face of the country had been regenerated and a new social and religious order had arisen.

5. It was more by example than by precept that the monk gained his victory over those whom he had come to convert and civilize. Books were unknown to these wandering nations, but they could understand the force of example. They saw the monks clearing away the forest or draining the marsh; they saw the dwellings and the places of worship which the monks erected; they were attracted by the churches and the beautiful ceremonies of the Christian religion. In the beginning the monks did not ask those around them to join in manual labor. Silently they themselves worked and gave to others the greater part of the fruit of their labors. Example so heroic gradually produced its impression upon those who had hitherto lived upon plunder and the fruit of the toil of others. Had the monk endeavored to induce the nations to assume the difficulties of labor by precept rather than by example, he would have failed. Had he looked for immediate results, he would have failed; but,

toiling as he did through the long years, his example brought results.

From the lesson of labor came the necessity of permanent settlements, and from the permanent settlements arose the towns, the villages, and finally the cities. Thus it was that the monastery became the nucleus and the center of civilization. At first but few would consent to abandon their nomadic lives and settle down within sound of the monastery bells, but by degrees the numbers increased; the monastery and the church became the center of a new social order. As time went on elementary schools arose; and from these humble beginnings we can trace the growth of education, until, about the year 800, the bishop of Rheims could insist on having an elementary school connected with every church of his diocese. Such was the gradual growth of the new Christian civilization and the new social order.

6. No social endeavor will succeed without system; it was system that gave strength to the work of the monks. Each monastery was a complete unit in itself and was self-supporting. In its own fields it planted its own wheat and corn; it had its orchards and vineyards; and it raised its own herd of cattle and flock of sheep. The monks spun their own flax and wool and made their own leather. They were their own tailors and shoemakers, cooks and bakers. They were so expert in architecture that under them were later trained the builders of the great cathedrals. They built reservoirs, and by means of viaducts led the mountain streams to supply water for the use of the monastery and for irrigation. They built roads and canals and bridges. Everywhere they opened elementary schools, which later developed into the more advanced schools and universities of Europe. They possessed remarkable skill in the copying and illum-

inating of manuscripts. So many books did their pens reproduce that, not only were the ancient classics preserved, but there sprang up a regular book trade at the fairs and markets.

The wonderful system in each monastery, and the mastery of every form of manual work, enabled the monks to send to new foundations skilled organizers and laborers who were sure to meet with success. We can picture to ourselves some monastery in central Europe where sufficient progress had been made to consider a branch establishment. Who would be chosen for the foundation? Some twenty or more monks would be selected, each a master in some trade and each an earnest social worker anxious to carry to others the benefits of religion and civilization, which he had seen grow and develop around his own monastery. No soldiers would be chosen to defend the new apostles. A special religious service would be held to call down the blessing of God upon the new foundation; then with a few pack animals and with the implements which they could carry, they went forth from their home to build another monastery in the wilderness. Through almost impervious forests they pressed, and came undaunted into the midst of hostile peoples. Here they chose a locality which others had rejected, perhaps because it was marshy or gave poor prospects of fertility. All hands were busy. A rude home was first constructed, the forest was cleared away, the marsh was filled. Progress was slow at first, and suffering and privations were many; but these men knew not failure. They made the fields yield up their treasures of grain, they planted vineyards on the hillsides, and erected shops and schools; and as the years went by they witnessed this new foundation becoming a center of

civilization, perhaps the humble beginning of one of Europe's great cities.

7. It may have been but curiosity or the hope of receiving some benefit that first induced the rude wanderers of Europe to take an interest in the manual labor of the monks. So remarkable was the success of the monks in their agricultural pursuits that even the barons and soldiers soon began to realize the great wealth that could be taken from the soil. They understood that it was easier to acquire wealth by tilling the earth than by robbing and plundering their neighbors. With the example of the monks before their eyes, they settled down upon the land. Moreover, many of them were so attracted by the monk's life of prayer and labor that they sought admission into the monastery. In this admission there was no distinction between the humble serf and the son of the baron warrior. When the rude inhabitants beheld the sons of the greatest families clad in the simple garb of the monk and toiling with their hands, they were led to admire the religion that could thus transform human nature and bring about such an equality and such a brotherhood of man.

With work and the multiplication of new foundations there came wealth — wealth in land, wealth in building, wealth in schools and libraries. But it mattered not for the individual monk, for he knew but poverty and privation. His was but a hard cot or bed of straw; delicacies in food he did not enjoy, and prayer and penance were his daily lot. But he cared not for the riches and pleasures of the world, because he was following a Master who had been crucified. The wealth of the monastery was not used for any personal gratification of the monk. With it he built inns for the traveler and the pilgrim; he constructed hospitals for the sick; he erected schools

and founded libraries. His achievements were wonderful indeed; and before the close of the fourteenth century the Benedictine monks alone had built thirty-seven thousand monasteries throughout Europe.

8. The European nations have been ungrateful to the Church which gave them the blessings of a social order built upon the teachings of Christianity; nor can our own country and our own time escape the censure of ingratitude. Let us take two instances. The first will relate to the missions of California. It was in 1769 that Junipero Serra and his fellow Franciscan friars undertook the great mission work of California. Its story and its success need not be repeated here. The first part of the table which we submit below will show the wonderful material prosperity of the converted Indians.

MISSIONS OF UPPER CALIFORNIA[1]

	1834 *under the friars*	1842 *under the secular power*
Christian Indians	30,650	4,500
Horned cattle	424,000	28,000
Horses and mules	62,000	3,800
Sheep	321,000	31,000
Cereal crops (bushels)	70,000	4,000

Probably the farmers in Iowa or Illinois do not possess greater per capita wealth than did the Indians in the missions along the Pacific Coast. Then came the cry of the politician and the self-styled reformer that the monks were robbing the poor Indians. The sentiment grew stronger day after day, until thousands of well-intentioned citizens were persuaded by the open propaganda that the monks were abusing their authority.

[1] Marshal, *Christian Missions*, vol. II, p. 256.

Whatever money was made in the missions by the friars and the Indians in their combined work was in fact given back to the Indian for his support and education. But the spoils were too rich and avarice was too strong to stay the hand of injustice. The Mexican Government took over the administration of the missions. Eight years went by. From a comparison of the tables given above the results may be seen. Moreover the Indians were driven to the bleak mountains, were robbed and murdered; and be it said to our disgrace that some years later, when California came into the possession of the United States, we Americans continued the work of spoliation and robbed the poor Indians of the little which remained to them after the few years of administration of the politicians of Mexico. Here we have an instance of a hostile and unappreciative secular power undoing in a few years the wonderful work of the Franciscan friars.

Let us take another example, that of the Philippine Islands. There were 1142 monks working among the natives when the islands passed to the United States. Against the friars went up the cry that had arisen against the Franciscans in California. No epithet was too vile or exaggerated to be applied to the friars in the Philippines. They, too, were accused of robbing the poor Filipinos and of amassing great wealth. We do not know the exact number of friars who labored in the Philippines, but certainly the following figures are more than conservative. The mission work in the islands began in 1564. From that time until the American invasion the work of converting the inhabitants went on. It covered more than three centuries; but let us set down the figures as only 300 years. Let us suppose, too, that the monks labored 300 days in each year. Probably most of them labored 365 days, for their Sundays were never free.

Again let us suppose that there were on an average 400 monks in the Philippines during these 300 years, a very conservative estimate. If, then, each of these monks made a dollar a day and invested it, at the end of three centuries they would have, without interest or profit, $36,000,000. If they made twenty-five cents a day they would have $9,000,000. Under the Taft Commission their property was judged to be worth less than $8,000,000. These were the friars who were abused by the press. "Let the monks disgorge," was the heading of one editorial on the subject, as if they had fattened on the very wealth of the land; and yet if they had made twenty-five cents a day their wealth would have been more than it really proved to be. Not only this, but everything that they made in the way of improvement had been turned back for the use and good of the natives. The poor friars! They earned less than twenty-five cents a day and were called robbers. The United States Steel Trust cleared $133,000,000 in one year, and the directors who manipulated the stock and divided the millions are called men of genius, Napoleons of the business world; but the poor monk who made less than twenty-five cents a day is called a thief, and his name is vilified. Such is the ingratitude in our own country, and in our own time. If we keep these facts in view, we shall be better able to understand the ingratitude of Europe towards the monks who gave to the European nations a Christian civilization and a Christian social order.

9. In studying the Christian social order of Europe we must look to its two sources, one in Italy and one in Ireland. From Italy went the sons of Benedict, and from Ireland the followers of Columbanus. For three centuries these two fountains of a new social order were divided and subdivided. In all northwestern Europe

these streams crossed and commingled. While the sons of Benedict were bringing the blessings of a Christian civilization to France and Germany, the monks under Columbanus were traversing the same countries, and even carried their work to the far-famed Bobbio in Italy. It is a tangled story and one that is not easy to follow; but if we have marked the sources and have followed the monks from Italy and Ireland as they worked in the common cause for the conversion of central and western Europe, we shall not be surprised to find the monasteries of the two great saints near each other, and even competing with each other in a holy ardor to convert the wandering tribes of Europe.

10. Benedict and Columbanus were not contemporaries. The latter was born in the year 543, the very year in which the former died. St. Benedict scarcely left the solitudes of the great monasteries of Monte Cassino and Subiaco. Here he received and trained his subjects and sent them to the missions of the North. The untiring St. Columbanus himself became a leader, and from Bangor brought his Irish monks into France, and from France to Italy. From Ireland, too, had gone St. Columba to make a foundation of a new monastery at the far-famed Iona in Scotland. Bangor and Iona were the nurseries of saints and scholars who went forth to do their part in laying the foundation of the new social order in Europe.

Even before the time of Benedict and Columbanus there were schools in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, England, and Ireland. St. Ambrose had done wonderful work at Milan, and St. Martin at Tours, and St. Honoratus had founded schools on the rocky island of Lerins, south of France. Already had Boethius and Cassiodorus written and taught in the schools of Italy. When,

however, in the year 543 St. Maurus, the disciple of Benedict, carried the message of his master into Gaul, the work of converting and civilizing the tribes of Europe began on that magnificent scale which was to create a new social order throughout the length and breadth of the land.

11. Many of the commercial and political centers of Europe can trace their foundations to the work of the monks. The monks did not choose the best places for themselves; on the contrary, to them were often given the dismal swamps and the sides of bleak hills. It was only their incessant labor and scientific knowledge that turned the wilderness into a garden and made the swamps produce fruit and grain. Every monastery was a source, not only of classical learning, law, and history, but also a center of the most useful information. For instance, at Iona, founded by St. Columba, the people were supplied with plows and were taught agriculture and the use of the forge. The monks not only encouraged the people to construct roads and build bridges, but they themselves labored with their own hands, and from their example the people learned all the useful arts. At Duranze, in France, there is still a bridge known as the Bon-pas or good passage. It was formerly the home of robbers who made the way unsafe for all travelers; but the monks came, and not only built the bridge over the dangerous chasm, but stood guard over it until all could travel with absolute safety.

12. "All these men had the text of the Apostle always on their lips. 'If any will not work, neither let him eat;' and that of the Psalmist, 'Thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands.' These texts are perpetually appealed to in their legends; and justly, for they are an epitome of their doctrine and life.

"The influence of such labors and examples rapidly made itself felt upon the rustic populations who lived in the neighborhood of this new cultivation or who followed the solitaries into the forest to see their works and to find in them guides and protectors. From admiration the peasants gladly passed to imitation. Often they became the voluntary coadjutors of the monks, and, without embracing monastic life, aided them to clear the ground and build their dwellings. Sometimes the brigands themselves, who at first had sought their lives or attempted to interdict them from entering the forest, ended by becoming agriculturalists after their example. The rapid increase of rural population in the neighborhood of monastic establishments is thus explained, and also the immense amount of labor which the cenobites could undertake, the results of which exist and astonish us still." [1]

"To the clergy, secular and regular, we are indebted for agriculture as well as for our colleges and hospitals; the tillage of uncultivated lands and the construction of roads, the enlargement of towns and villages, the institution of post houses and inns, arts, trades, and manufactures, commerce internal and external, laws civil and political — in a word, everything that we originally received from the Church. Our ancestors were barbarians, whom Christianity was obliged to teach even the art of raising the necessaries of life.

"Almost all the grants made to monasteries in the early ages of the Church consisted of wastes which the monks brought into cultivation with their own hands. Tractless forests, impassable morasses, extensive heaths, were the sources of that wealth with which we so vehemently reproached the clergy." [2]

[1] Montalembert, *Monks of the West*, vol. II, p. 376

[2] Chateaubriand, *Genius of Christianity*, p. 651.

13. In the following remarkable passage Montalembert has depicted the labors of St. Benedict and his disciples. "The results of Benedict's work were immense. In his lifetime, as after his death, the sons of the noblest races in Italy and the best of the converted barbarians came in multitudes to Monte Cassino. They came out again and descended from it to spread themselves over all the West; missionaries and husbandmen who were soon to become the doctors and pontiffs, the artists and legislators, the historians and poets of the new world. They went forth to spread peace and faith, light and life, freedom and charity, knowledge and art, the word of God and the genius of man, the Holy Scriptures and the great works of classical literature, amid the despairing provinces of the destroyed empire, and even into the barbarous regions from which the destruction came forth. Less than a century after the death of Benedict all that barbarism had won from civilization was reconquered; and more still, his children took in hand to carry the Gospel beyond those limits which had confined the first disciples of Christ. After Italy, Gaul, and Spain had been retaken from the enemy, Great Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia were in turn invaded, conquered, and incorporated into Christendom. The West was saved. A new empire was founded. A new world began." [1]

14. Here we are reminded of the work of the missionaries in our own country. Thomas Jefferson would give more credit to one who introduced a new plant into a country than to a winner of a battle. What honors should he not have bestowed upon the early missionaries in this country! The first plow that cut the soil of our western prairies was brought in by a Jesuit missionary,

[1] Vol. I, p. 40.

and the first wheat was planted by his hands. The missionaries first began the cultivation of sugar-cane in the South, and only after they had succeeded could they persuade the settlers to plant and cultivate it. French Jesuits were the first to carry the orange to the present orange region of the Pacific slope. The missionaries planted the first fig tree and olive and English walnut; they were the first to call attention to the cotton plant, made the first wine from the native grape, wax from the wild laurel, and incense from the gum tree. They were the first to discover the salt springs of New York and the copper mines of Michigan. In the far-famed California missions the Indians were taught to make looms and to weave and to till the soil. Roads were laid out and regular government established among them, and the churches which they built with artistic skill are still the admiration and wonder of tourists.

15. The work of the Irish monks after the successful mission of St. Patrick went on with rapid strides. So many schools arose in Ireland that not only were there ample means for the education of the clergy and the children of the better classes, but from all parts of Europe scholars came by hundreds and thousands. Armagh, Cashel, and Lismore are among the famous seats of learning. To them came the English scholars fleeing before the attacking Danes. Some idea of the wonderful work of the Irish monks can be gathered from the fact that they established thirteen monasteries in Scotland, twelve in England, forty in Gaul, nine in Belgium, sixteen in Bavaria, fifteen in Switzerland and six in Italy. All this was accomplished before the close of the seventh century. Nor does it detract any from the work of St. Columbanus and his followers that his foundations were gradually superseded by the

more carefully organized rule of Benedict. To Columbanus the world owes a wonderful debt of gratitude. He and his Irish monks possessed in highest measure those intrepid and dauntless qualities of the pioneer which are needed to break and subdue the wild impulses of the savage.

16. Over this splendid work of the followers of Benedict and Columbanus a veil of secrecy has been thrown. Students read the history of Europe and know little of the great sources from which have sprung our Christian civilization and social order. Every effort has been made to belittle the work of Benedict, and silent contempt has all but obscured the transcendent work of Columbanus and Columba; and yet the history of the civilization and social order of Europe which omits these great factors and these great men gives but a partial representation of the remolding of those chaotic periods.

We close this chapter with a reflection. Our social order is a Christian social order. It is not perfect; for human passions, antagonisms, and animosities arise to thwart or crush the work of Christianity; but it surpasses the social order of any other kind or that of any other people. In seeking for new remedies or new methods of social betterment there are those who would discard the past and ignore the power of Christianity. In their minds social work should supersede religion. Such social leaders as reformers have failed to grasp the lesson of history. As in the past, so in the present and in the future, social action and the social order must be closely united with religion. Where religion perishes the social life of a people decays.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Do we owe our present social order to Christianity?
2. Can it be said that the social order of our time, in Europe and the United States and South America, is founded on Christian principles?
3. Read the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on: Boetius, Cassiadorus, St. Martin of Tours, St. Benedict, St. Columbanus, St. Columba, St. Boniface, St. Bede, and Alcuin.
4. Compare the work of Benedict with that of Columbanus.
5. How did the monk ennoble labor?
6. Did Christianity bring the blessings of civilization?
7. Did Christianity bring the blessings of social prosperity?
8. What is the difference between civilization and social prosperity?
9. How did the monks preserve the ancient manuscripts and literature?
10. When the monks accumulated wealth did they use it for themselves?
11. Did the monks teach agriculture, the building trades, etc.?
12. On what kind of land did the monks usually make new foundations?
13. Read the article on monasticism in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* and in some other encyclopedia. Compare the two articles.
14. Has our age understood and appreciated the social work of the monks?
15. Did they found schools, hospitals, inns, etc.?
16. Compare the work of the Benedictines in Europe with that of the Franciscans in California.
17. Did the monks lead idle lives?
18. What were the effects of prayer and other divine services?
19. Did the monks need military protection?
20. How did cities arise in Europe?
21. Can our present social order endure without Christianity?

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CHAPTER IV

THE RULE AND METHOD OF BENEDICT

1. The gradual growth of the new social order. 2. The evils of the times. 3. The effect of a system. 4. Practice before precept. 5. Authority necessary. 6. The inner court. 7. Enforcement of discipline. 8. The office of cellarer. 9. Temporalities of the monastery. 10. Clothing and provisions. 11. The skilled workman. 12. Sunday in the monastery. The scriptorium. 13. Other artistic work. 14. The monastery as an inn. 15. Royal visits. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. "St. Benedict found the world, physical and social, in ruins, and his mission was to restore it in the way, not of science, but of nature, not as if setting about to do it, not professing to do it by any set time or by any rare specific or by any series of strokes, but so quietly, patiently, gradually, that often, till the work was done, it was not known to be doing. It was a restoration, rather than a visitation, correction, or conversion. The new world which he helped to create was a growth rather than a structure. Silent men were observed about the country, or discovered in the forest, digging, clearing, and building; and other silent men, not seen, were sitting in the cold cloister, tiring their eyes, and keeping their attention on the stretch, while they painfully deciphered and copied and recopied the manuscripts which they had saved. There was no one that 'contended, or cried out,' or drew attention to what was going on; but by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning, and a city. Roads and

bridges connected it with other abbeys and cities, which had similarly grown up; and what the haughty Alaric or fierce Attila had broken to pieces, these patient meditative men had brought together and made to live again." [1]

2. St. Benedict was born in the year 480, and he died about the middle of the next century. He must have been brave, indeed, to plan for the perpetuity of his endeavors, for the times and circumstances were most unfavorable for the work which he set out to accomplish. In 410 the Visigoths had sacked Rome; then came the Vandals under Genseric in 455; and finally the Teutonic mercenaries themselves turned upon the city. These were some of the worst calamities; but during the greater part of the century there was a continual warfare. And not only was the whole country disturbed by frequent invasions of hostile nations, but even in religion the time was unpropitious; for Arianism claimed the greater number of the ruling races in Italy, Spain, and southern Gaul.

3. In viewing the work of St. Benedict we realize that it could not have been accomplished without order and system. Every house which was opened by his monks was a social settlement destined to leave its impress upon the people of the community. To marshal so many followers and carry on such work was no easy task. After years of study and experience Benedict was prepared to leave to his spiritual children a rule which was not only to serve them in the conversion and civilization of Europe, but which with only slight changes still directs the Benedictines in every quarter of the globe. It was the spiritual guidance of his followers which he had in view, and yet in training them in the

[1] Cardinal Newman, *Historical Sketches*, vol. II, p. 410.

supernatural life he made of them apt social workers. In the present chapter our comments will be limited to the social phase of the rule of the monks. This rule, written towards the end of Benedict's career, shows that he drew from the writings of monastic life in the Eastern Church and from his experience in directing his own soul and in guiding others.

4. In the work of ennobling labor and bringing the wandering nations to adopt permanent settlements example counted more than precept. Moreover the pride of life was to be subdued by breaking down all distinction of classes within the monastic walls; and hence we see St. Benedict as a thoughtful legislator demanding perfect equality among those who were to follow his rule. "Let the abbot make no distinction of person in the monastery. Let him not love one more than another, unless it be one whom he findeth more exemplary in good works and obedience. Let not a freeborn be preferred to a freedman, unless there be some other reasonable cause. But if from a just motive the abbot deemeth it expedient to make such a distinction, he may do so in regard to the rank of anyone whomsoever; otherwise let everyone keep his own place; for 'whether bond or free,' we are all one in Christ, and we all bear an equal burden of servitude under one Lord, 'for there is no respect of persons with God.' We are distinguished with Him in this regard alone, if we are found to excel others in good works and in humility. Therefore let him have equal charity for all and impose a uniform discipline for all according to merit."[1] We can scarcely overestimate the results of this wise legislation, which put the son of the serf on terms of equality with the son of the proud warrior or ruler.

[1] *Rule of St. Benedict*, c. 24.

5. While authority is necessary and must be vested in some individual or in a number of persons, Benedict would not have too much power centered in the person of the abbot who ruled the community. "Whenever any important matters are to be transacted in the monastery, let the abbot call together the whole community, and himself announce the matter which is to be considered. Having heard the brethren's advice, let him weigh the matter with himself and do what he thinks best." [1]

We can well understand how many occasions called for prudent consideration. Let us take the single example of establishing a separate community. Holiness of life would no doubt be the first quality of the monk who was to be made abbot in the new foundation; but virtue would not be sufficient, for the superior should possess prudence and foresight, and even bodily strength. The gift of governing men should be indispensable for the success of the undertaking. Each of the monks who was to take part in the enterprise was chosen for some position. A carpenter was needed, or perhaps, under the guidance of a skilled mechanic, every member of the community could turn his hand to some useful trade; even the abbot would take his place at manual labor. A gardener was chosen and a cook, a musician, and a copyist for the incipient library. Perhaps, too, there was a doubt about the selection of a locality; and monks who had come back to the parent monastery would be called upon to give their opinion to the assembled brethren. When these and other topics had been considered, it rested with the abbot to act as prudence dictated.

6. Once a new foundation was established, with its buildings and inner court, the monk spent the greater part of his life within the circumscribed limits of the

[1] *Ib.* c. 3.

monastery. "If it can be done, the monastery should be so situated that all the necessaries, such as water, the mill, the garden, are enclosed and the various arts may be plied inside of the monastery, so that there may be no need for the monks to go about outside." Many of the larger monasteries were built in rectangular form, with a great inner court, often beautified with flowers, trees, and running water. Here the monk could always seek repose when not engaged in his assigned work, but his many duties often took him to the barn or to the more distant fields or vineyards.

7. "Every age and understanding should have its proper discipline. Whenever, therefore, boys and immature youths, or such as cannot understand how grave a penalty excommunication is, are guilty of a serious fault, let them undergo severe fasting or be disciplined with corporal punishment, that they may be corrected." [1] "The children are to be kept under discipline at all times and by every one. Therefore let the younger honor their elders, and the older love the younger. In naming each other let no one be allowed to address another by his simple name; but let the older style the younger brethren, brothers; let the young, however, call their elders, fathers, by which is implied the reverence due to a father. But because the abbot is considered to hold the place of Christ, let him be styled Lord and Abbot." [2]

In olden times the rod was used frequently and with great severity. Even to the middle of the nineteenth century girls and young women were publicly flogged in the schools of England. While St. Benedict followed the spirit of the age and laid down rules for corporal punishment, he felt that due allowance should be made for the thoughtlessness of youth. The young people to whom he

[1] *Ib.* c. 30–31. [2] *Ib.* c. 63.

refers in the rule were of two classes — those who attended the schools connected with the monastery and those who entered the institution to become monks. It was customary in those days for parents to dedicate a son or a daughter to religious life before the child was mature enough to understand the obligations which were imposed by the rule. While the practice had commendable points, it led to abuses, and was later abolished by the legislation of the Church. The custom, however, gives us an insight into the spirit of the times, which prompted pious parents to make the sacrifice of their children to the service of the Church. It was by such sacrifices and not by power of physical resources, that the Church won her battles during these trying periods.

8. In the thirty-first chapter of the Rule of St. Benedict we come to an important office, that of the cellarer. The word needs an explanation. In other religious orders the cellarer was called the provost or procurator. He was the all-round utility man of the monastery and had charge of the temporalities of the institution. Not all the monks could devote their entire time to prayer and study. It was necessary that some one should come in contact with the outside world and conduct the business for the monastery. This individual was called the cellarer. He met all who came to the monastery on business; he kept the books and paid the bills; he provided the food for the table and things for use and wear. "Let there be chosen from the brotherhood as cellarer of the monastery a wise man, of settled habits, temperate, frugal, not haughty, not violent, not resentful, not dilatory, not wasteful, but fearing God, who may be as a father to the whole brotherhood. . . . Let him care for the sick, the children, the guests, and the poor, with all solicitude, knowing that without doubt he will have to

give an account of all these things on Judgment Day. Let him regard all the vessels of the monastery and all its substance as if they were sacred vessels of the altar. Let him neglect nothing, and let him not give way to avarice, nor let him be wasteful and a squanderer of the goods of the monastery; but let him do all things in due measure and according to the bidding of his abbot. . . . If the community is large let assistants be given him, that with their help he too may fulfil the office entrusted to him with an even temper. Let the things which are to be given be distributed, and the things which are to be gotten asked for at the proper times, so that nobody may be disturbed or grieved in the house of God."

This rule of the cellarer is of itself sufficient to show what a busy and well-organized place was a Benedictine house. The semi-barbarous conquerors of Europe bowed down with reverence before this strange power which was supported by neither arms nor soldiers. Here was found wealth, but it was used for others; here were work and energy, but they were for the interests of the people; here were order and discipline, but the end in view was not the subjugation of the nations; here were strong men under great leaders, but they were seeking to instruct and ennoble those with whom they came in contact.

This thrift which was so evident in a Benedictine monastery has been duplicated down the centuries by various religious communities; and we find many an example of it in our own time and country. In the early forties of the nineteenth century a few devoted women of foreign birth received a small bequest of land in the Middle West of the United States. They lived in a miserable cabin, while with their own hands they cleared away the forest for cultivation and tilled the soil. In the meantime they taught a few children of the neigh-

borhood. In a short time candidates came from American families. The community grew and ramified until it had numerous schools and academies. The little cabin is preserved as a sacred souvenir of the past. Visit the place today and you will find magnificent buildings, surpassed by few institutions in the land; you will find everything which goes to make up the appointments of a modern school. What has wrought the change? The devotion of a thousand nuns — a thousand nuns teaching in parish schools and academies, and turning back to the motherhouse their meager earnings. There have been no large donations, no endowments; but the steady income of a thousand nuns, each contributing to the common support of the central house, has done what an endowment of millions of dollars could never have accomplished.

Among other striking examples we recall that of a religious community of men who came to the West without resources of any kind. They bought on credit a tract of land and material for building. In this community were skilled carpenters, masons, and an architect. If the government or public erected the building which this community now owns it would cost a million dollars or more. It contains shops and printing presses; it sends forth numerous books and pamphlets; it enables hundreds of young men to get an education at a minimum cost; and it prepares candidates for foreign missions. Thus personal sacrifice to education takes the place of rich endowments; and after the lapse of centuries the spirit and method of Benedict find many an application in the institutions of the United States.

9. "Let the abbot appoint brethren on whose life and character he can rely, over the property of the monastery in iron tools, clothing, and things generally, and let him

assign to them, as he shall deem proper, all the articles which must be collected after use and stored away. Let the abbot keep a list of these articles, so that, when the brethren in turn succeed each other in these trusts, he may know what he giveth and what he receiveth back. If anyone, however, useth the goods of the monastery slovenly or carelessly, let him be reprimanded; and if he doth not amend, let him come under the discipline of the rule." [1]

This is but an extension of the rule of the cellarer, for cases where, as in larger houses, more than one of the monks was needed for the temporalities. Tools are mentioned as most valuable to the community; a proof that many of the monks were engaged in manual labor. It comes to us as a surprise to find that a monastic house would have so many tools and that a person was chosen to look after them. No doubt these tools consisted not only of the various implements of agriculture, but also such as were used by carpenters and masons.

They were practical men, these monks, and although they rejoiced in the beauties of God's creation, "they were not dreamy sentimentalists, to fall in love with melancholy winds and purling rills, and waterfalls and nodding groves; but their poetry was the poetry of hard work and hard fare, unselfish hearts and charitable hands. They could plough and reap; they could hedge and ditch; they could make hurdles for their huts; they could make a road; they could divert or secure the streamlet's bed; they could bridge a torrent. Mr. Warner mentions one of their luxuries — clear, wholesome water. It was an allowable one, especially as they obtained it by their own patient labor. If their grounds are picturesque, if their views are rich, they made them so, and had, we presume,

[1] *Ib.* c. 32.

a right to enjoy the work of their own hands. They found a swamp, a moor, a thicket, a rock, and they made an Eden in the wilderness. They destroyed snakes; they extirpated wildcats, wolves, boars, bears; they put to flight or they converted rovers, outlaws, robbers. The gloom of the forest departed, and the sun for the first time since the Deluge shone upon the moist ground." [1]

10. The wisdom of the Benedictine legislation is shown in the directions for clothing and provisions for the table. As many of the monks were engaged in manual labor, they needed their strength of body, and hence required a sufficiency of wholesome food. St. Benedict allowed the monks the use of wine, although it would seem that he preferred them to abstain from its use. He made ample regulation, too, for the sick and weak, and for the aged and children. In reading these rules one must be impressed by the fact that they will bear the strictest criticism, and that they are free from all touch of fanaticism or extreme asceticism.

"Let clothing be given to the brethren according to the circumstances of the place and the nature of the climate where they live; because in cold regions more is needed, while in hot regions less. This consideration, therefore, resteth with the abbot. We believe, however, that for a temperate climate a cowl and a tunic for each monk are sufficient; a woolen cowl for winter and a thin or worn one for summer, and a scapular for work; and stockings and shoes as covering for the feet. Let the monks not argue about the color or the texture of all these things, but let them be such as can be had in the country in which they live or can be bought more cheaply. Let the abbot, however, look to the size, that these garments are not too small, but fitted for those who are to

[1] Newman, *Historical Sketches*, vol. II, p. 398.

wear them. . . . For their bedding let a straw mattress, a blanket, a coverlet and a pillow be sufficient." [1]

"Let two dishes of cooked food be sufficient for all the brethren. And if there be fruit or fresh vegetables, a third may be added. Let a pound of bread be sufficient for a day, whether there be only one refection or both dinner and supper. Let a third part of the pound be reserved by the cellarer and be given at supper. If, however, the work hath been specially hard, it is left to the discretion and power of the abbot to add something if he thinks fit. Although we read that wine is not at all proper for monks, yet, because monks in our times cannot be persuaded of this, let us agree to this at least, that we do not drink to satiety, but sparingly; because 'Wine maketh even wise men to fall off.' Although human nature is of itself drawn to feel compassion for these life periods, namely, old age and childhood, still let the prescription of the rule make provision also for them. Let their natural infirmity be always taken into account, and let the strictness of the rule not be kept with them in regard to food; but let there be a loving consideration in their behalf, and let them eat before the regular hours." [2]

11. "If there be skilled workmen in the monastery, let them work at their art in all humility. . . ." [3]

"Idleness is the enemy of the soul; and therefore the brethren ought to be employed in manual labor at certain times, at others in devout reading. Hence we believe that the time for each will be properly ordered. . . . They are monks in truth who live by the work of their hands, as did also our forefathers and the Apostles. However, on account of the faint-hearted, let all things be done with moderation." [4]

[1] *St. Benedict's Rule*, c. 55.
[2] *Ib.* cc. 37–40. [3] *Ib.* c. 56. [4] *Ib.* c. 48.

In the Benedictine rule every part had its assigned duty, with prayer and meditation first, not only in the order of time, but in that of importance. It was prayer that sanctified the life of the monk and made his life different from that of others. By his daily toil the monk not only provided for his own wants, but was able to assist others. He was the Red Cross worker of his day. In the early centuries the monks of Egypt had carried provisions to the impoverished districts of that country. The monks of St. Gall in Switzerland often assisted the poor with donations of fish from the pond and grain from the farm. Periods of distress were frequent in those disturbed days, and the monks rescued thousands from starvation by their timely help. We read of the monks near Cologne helping the famine sufferers in the twelfth century by distributing bread, meat, and vegetables to fifteen hundred persons; and during the same period the famous monastery of Citeaux was able to sustain two thousand sufferers for many months. No one who needed food or rest was turned from the monastery. It was the refuge for all in suffering or want. This generosity on the part of the monasteries was made possible only by the prolonged and continual manual labor of the inmates.

12. "On Sunday also let all devote themselves to reading, except those who are appointed to the various functions. But if any one should be so careless and slothful that he will not or cannot meditate or read, let some work be given him to do, that he may not be idle. Let such work or art be given to the weak and the sickly brethren that they are neither idle, nor so wearied with the strain of work that they are driven away. Their weakness must be taken into account by the abbot." [1]

[1] *Ib.* c. 49.

Among the works of art to which reference is made in this rule, that of making books came first. The preparation of the parchment from skins required long practice and skill. There was the difficult art of preparing the fluid, writing with letters of gold, and ornamenting the cover with precious gems. The skill and untiring devotedness of the old copyists are faithfully depicted in the *Golden Legend.* [1]

Friar Pacificus transcribing and illuminating:

FRIAR PACIFICUS

It is growing dark! Yet one line more,
And then my work for today is o'er.
I come again to the name of the Lord!
Ere I that awful name record,
That is spoken so lightly among men,
Let me pause awhile, and wash my pen;
Pure from blemish and blot must it be
When it writes that word of mystery.
Thus have I labored on and on,
Nearly through the Gospel of John.
Can it be that from the lips
Of this same gentle Evangelist,
That Christ himself perhaps has kissed,
Came the dread Apocalypse?
It has a very awful look
As it stands there at the end of the book,
Like the sun in an eclipse.
Ah me! when I think of that vision divine,
Think of writing it, line by line,
I stand in awe of the terrible curse,
Like the trump of doom, in the closing verse.
God forgive me if ever I
Take aught from the book of that Prophecy,
Lest my part too shall be taken away
From the Book of Life on the Judgment Day.

[1] See the "Scriptorium" in Longfellow's *Golden Legend.*

This is well written, though I say it.
I should not be afraid to display it
In open day on the selfsame shelf
With the writings of St. Thecla herself,
Or of Theodosius, who of old
Wrote the Gospels in letters of gold.
That goodly folio standing yonder,
Without a single blot or blunder,
Would not bear away the palm from mine
If we should compare them line for line.

There, now, is an initial letter!
Saint Ulric himself never made a better!
Finished down to the leaf and the snail,
Down to the eyes on the peacock's tail!
And now, as I turn the volume over
And see what lies between cover and cover,
What treasures of art these pages hold,
All ablaze with crimson and gold,
God forgive me! I seem to feel
A certain satisfaction steal
Into my heart, and into my brain,
As if my talent had not lain
Wrapped in a napkin, and all in vain.
Yes, I might almost say to the Lord,
"Here is a copy of thy Word,
Written out with much toil and pain;
Take it, O Lord, and let it be
As something I have done for thee."
(*He looks from the window.*)
How sweet the air is! How fair the scene!
I wish I had as lovely a green
To paint my landscapes and my leaves.
How the swallows twitter under the eaves!
There, now, there is one in her nest;
I can just catch a glimpse of her head and breast,
And will sketch her thus, in her quiet nook,
For the margin of my Gospel book.
(*He makes a sketch.*)
I can see no more. Through the valley yonder
A shower is passing; I hear the thunder

Mutter its curses in the air,
The devil's own and only prayer!
The dusty road is brown with rain,
And, speeding on with might and main,
Hitherward rides a gallant train.
They do not parley, they cannot wait,
But hurry in at the convent gate.
What a fair lady! And beside her
What a handsome, graceful rider!
Now she gives him her hand to alight;
They will beg a shelter for the night.
I will go down to the corridor
And try to see that face once more.
It will do for the face of some beautiful saint,
Or for one of the Maries I shall paint.
(*Goes out.*)

13. But copying and binding books was not the only artistic work to which the monks devoted their hours. Cardinal Newman gives us an account of St. Dunstan. "He had a taste for the arts generally, especially music. He painted and embroidered; his skill in smith's work is recorded in the well-known legend of his combat with the evil one. And as the monks of Hilarion joined gardening with psalmody, and Bernard and his Cistercians joined field work with meditation, so did St. Dunstan use music and painting as directly expressive or suggestive of devotion. 'He excelled in writing, painting, moulding in wax, carving in wood and bone, and in work in gold, silver, iron, and brass,' says the writer of his life. 'And he used his skill in musical instruments to charm away from himself and others their secular annoyances and to rouse them to the thought of heavenly harmony, both by the sweet words with which he accompanied his airs and by the concord of those airs themselves.' And then he goes on to mention how on one occasion, when he had hung his harp against the wall and the wind

brought out from its strings a wild melody, he recognized in it one of the antiphons in the Commune Martyrum *Gaudete in Coelis*, etc., and used it for his own humiliation." [1]

14. The monastery was the inn or the hotel for all travelers and pilgrims in those early days. Merchants, too, going to the fairs or returning, found hospitality with the monks. No one was refused; and night or day, when the weary traveler knocked at the great door of the house, there was a monk on duty to receive him. "Let all guests that come be received as Christ, because He will say, 'I was a stranger and you took me in.' And let due honor be shown to all, especially to those 'of the household of the faith,' and to strangers. When, therefore, a guest is announced, let him be met by the superior and the brethren with every mark of charity. And first let them pray together, and then let them associate with one another in peace. . . . Let the kitchen of the abbot and the guests be apart, that the brethren may not be disturbed by the guests who arrive at uncertain hours, and who are never wanting in a monastery. Let two brothers who are able to fulfil this office well, go into this kitchen for a year. Let help be given them as they need it, that they may serve without murmuring; and when they have not enough to do, let them go out again for employment where it is commanded them. Let this course be followed, not only in this office, but in all the offices of the monastery, that whenever the brethren need help it be given them, and that when they have not enough to do, they again obey orders. Moreover, let also a brother whose soul the fear of God possesseth, have assigned to him the apartment of the guests, where there should be a sufficient number of beds made up;

[1] *Historical Sketches*, vol. II, p. 415.

and let the house of God be wisely managed by the wise." [1]

15. As is evident from the above rule, a Benedictine monastery was not altogether a secluded and noiseless place; and great care was required to give the inmates protection from the intrusion of straggling visitors and the great concourse of people who came to the monastery at times of religious festivals. Lords and ladies would arrive with a numerous retinue, or long lines of pilgrims would wind up the narrow road which led to the monastery gate. We read of such a pilgrimage being made to the monastery of Erdennes as early as 838, to implore the prayers of the monks to save the crops of the country from devastating rains. Fortunately there were chroniclers in each house, and the records of the scribes, like those of Matthew Paris of St. Albans, have given to us many historical events which otherwise would have been lost to posterity.

"Many of the great ones of the land wished to be united in some kind of spiritual bonds with an abbey where they had relatives and friends; and we find them suing for admission to friendship or confraternity with the monks. The effect of this confraternity was that they became real members (confratres) of the house and shared in all its good works and merits. The confrater was sometimes allowed an honorary seat in the chapel . . . Kings and princes considered it an honor to become confratres of abbeys. William the Conqueror was a confrater of Cluni and also of Battle Abbey which he founded. In 1460 Henry VI, coming to Croyland (England), and being delighted with the religious life of the monks, stayed there three days and nights and begged to be admitted into their brotherhood. . . . But this connection with the great was not without its disadvantages; for monasteries

[1] *Rule*, c. 53.

became not only the shelter for the poor, but also for the rich. They were the hotels of the day. Kings and nobles put up with the monks, and often overstayed their welcome, filling the place with their retinues and disturbing the peace of the cloister. A favorite time for the royal visitor to spend some weeks at the abbey were the holiday seasons of Christmas, of Easter, or Whitsuntide. He would add the majesty of his presence and of all his train to some function of the Church; and the splendor of the celebration of such or such a feast would remain long in the memories of monk and people to whom the Church's ceremonies were living realities."[1]

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Could the nations of Europe have been civilized by armies?
2. Could civil legislation have brought about our Christian civilization?
3. Would Europe have become civilized without the assistance rendered by Christianity?
4. Would instruction without example have induced the wandering nation to adopt permanent settlements?
5. Do you think that the social and economic condition of Europe was worse after the Migration of Nations than it was in 1923?
6. If Christianity was needed to bring order out of the chaos of those times, is Christianity needed at present?
7. Is man more independent of the social blessings of Christianity now than he was in the sixth century?
8. Did authority as practiced in the monastery have a wholesome effect on the undisciplined nations of Europe?
9. If the monk remained within his monastic walls, how could he have an influence on the world around him?
10. St. Benedict did not attempt a new house of foundation until there were enough subjects to fulfil the duties of a monastery. What were the good results of such a policy?
11. Which do you think is more reasonable, the discipline of a monastic house or the discipline of an army?

[1] E. L. Taunton, *The English Black Monks of St. Benedict*, Vol. I, pp. 61–63.

12. Why could religious superiors dispense with many of the severer rules which must be enforced in any army?

13. What proofs have you of the remarkable elasticity of the rule of Benedict?

14. Why have monks and other religious orders had more influence over peoples than an army has ever been able to exercise?

15. How was it possible for the monks to lead lives of prayer as they were supposed to do, and at the same time have their houses thrown open as public inns?

16. What conclusion may be drawn from the fact that there were local abuses in monasteries?

References for Further Study

The references are the same as for Chapter III.

CHAPTER V

CARE OF THE SICK

1. Christianity and the care of the sick. 2. Hospital movement. 3. Growth of social institutions. 4. Hospital construction. 5. Tender care of the sick. 6. The sick person a child of God. 7. Support of hospitals. 8. Management of hospitals. 9. Nursing a profession. 10. The care of lepers. 11. Extent of leprosy. 12. The leper often an outcast. 13. Humane treatment of lepers. 14. The lepers of St. Julian. 15. Isolation enforced. 16. Picture of a leper. 17. The saints and their special love of lepers. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. Care of the sick has been coextensive with Christianity. It is true that in pagan times there were physicians and nurses for the rich; but the poor and the slave were cast forth like the useless beast of burden, and left to die without care or pity. When the poor peasants came into the city of ancient Rome they had only the marketplaces or the porches of the temples for a resting place. Ancient Rome provided her poor with games and sports, but took no account of the sick who were left to expire without shelter. The slaves were often unburied, and the Esquiline Hill was whitened with the number of bones of the neglected dead. Even Cato, who was known for his liberality towards the slaves, never thought of providing for them in their old age, but heartlessly sold them to avoid the expense of caring for them. It was the Church that took the poor to her arms and nursed them with a tender solicitude. The blood of Christ had been shed for the poor as well as for the rich; and the supreme sacrifice of Calvary was for

all mankind. The Church, too, was for all mankind. Her mission to the human race was not only to save souls but to alleviate every form of human suffering. The heart of her divine Founder had gone out to the sick and suffering; and she was to carry the same divine mission of mercy to the sick wherever she would build a temple or erect an altar.

2. As soon as the Church was free to exercise public authority, she began at once the erection of hospitals. At Edessa, in 375, St. Ephrem prepared three hundred beds for the plague-stricken people. At Caesarea the hospital built under the direction of St. Basil resembled a city with regular streets and dwellings for different classes of patients. At a later period Constantinople had thirty-five hospitals. The first hospital in the West was founded by Fabiola, whose name has been immortalized by the story of Cardinal Wiseman. She sent servants into the public ways to collect the sick and neglected. Later in Rome we find a pilgrims' hospital built by Pammachius. In Rome, in the eighth century, under Pope Zacharia, there were four hospitals; and Stephen II, his successor, founded a fifth for a hundred poor. But in subsequent times the number of such institutions greatly increased, until there were in Rome twenty-five rich and vast hospitals for the sick, for the poor and for the strangers. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Pope Innocent III, leading a movement to improve hospital service, sent delegates throughout Europe to study the architecture and management of hospitals in various countries; and utilizing the knowledge thus attained, he built the hospital of the Holy Ghost in Rome, which for centuries remained a model for all similar institutions.

3. "To a traveler of the Middle Ages, the monuments

of charity in each city and village, independent even of their religious interest, must have been often amongst the most curious objects for observation. Poets celebrate them, as may be witnessed in the works of Facius Ubertus, who mentions the vast hospital of Siena served by devoted brothers. The beautiful and superb hospital of Beaune resembled a palace rather than a retreat for the poor. It was founded by Rolin, a knight of Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy. At Caen the hospital for the lepers had a park attached to it, enclosed within walls. The hospitalers of St. Mandé at Paris occupied a space of about sixty acres, in a healthy and isolated spot. The Hotel Dieu, which covered four acres with its original structure, extended in reality, by comprising its seven dependent buildings, over a space of forty acres. The Hotel Dieu at Lyons, one of the most magnificent hospitals in Europe, was founded in the middle of the sixth century by Childebert, son of Clovis, and his wife, queen of the Ostrogoths. The body of the building, which was of vast extent, was in the form of a Greek cross. The grand infirmary measured nearly five hundred feet in length. In the center of the cross stood a high altar, which could be seen from the extremity of the most distant wards. There were two large and lofty halls, styled chambers of the convalescent, the patients of which were received at meals in the refectory. An order of nuns, one hundred and fifty in number, performed the duty of nurses, watched over and tended the sick, administered the medicines, and prepared the diet. The hospital could receive three thousand patients. . . .

"In Florence, in the sixteenth century, there were three hundred and five houses of charity, of which some were on a magnificent scale. In Antwerp there were thirty-three houses of charity endowed by the citizens. Paris

alone contained forty-eight hospitals. In Besancon, which is a small city, there were five hospitals of charity. In fact before the revolution France contained more than seven hundred hospitals. And yet their multiplication did not prevent the establishment of hospitals on a great scale; that of the Holy Ghost at Rome received eighteen hundred patients; and those of Vienna and Naples admitted as many as three thousand. The smallest towns and villages had then some houses of mercy to receive the poor, which often supplied the means of transmitting to posterity the names of great men. The parish of Brie-Comte-Robert, in the diocese of Paris, is so called from Count Robert, grandson of King Louis-le-Gros, who is known to have been the founder of the Hotel Dieu, and of the church in that place, which contained so few inhabitants. Even to parish churches there were foundations attached for the relief of poor persons." [1]

4. With the building of the great Gothic churches in Europe went the construction of hospitals. In beauty and architecture they vied with the finest churches. They had vaulted roofs, with two rows of windows and a gallery to screen off the light. The size of these large hospitals gave far more space for each patient than we can afford to give in our modern hospitals. The greatest care was taken in choosing a site for these institutions. Generally they were located on a river and on an elevated position, and were well provided with light and fresh air. The kitchens, bakeries, and laundries were off at one side so as not to interfere with the patients. The modern reader may be surprised to learn that the quiet zones which surround our modern hospitals are not new, and that many of the hospitals in medieval times enjoyed the same privilege; and we find chains drawn across the

[1] *Ages of Faith*, K. Digby. London, 1846. Vol. II, pp. 480-481.

street at night, in order to divert all traffic and to protect the patients from the noise of even the pedestrians. For the general good of the patients there were spacious gardens surrounding the hospitals, where the convalescents could take exercise when the weather permitted. In the hospital at Lyons there was a vast hall with a fireplace around which the convalescents could sit.

5. The home for the sick bore the same name as the place of public worship. The "maison Dieu" it was called, the house of God; and in that house of God everything was done to inspire confidence. The superior or chaplain went down to the entrance with acolytes and lighted candles to receive the sick person in the name of God. The common ward for the sick was unlike the bleak and depressing wards of a modern hospital, with low ceilings, and bare, whitewashed walls. In the ages of faith nothing was too good for God's suffering ones. The great room, high, arched, and ornamental, was more like a church than a hospital. The walls were decorated with the paintings of the masters. The great hospital in Toledo, Spain, had six of the masterpieces of the school of Rubens. The classical picture of the Immaculate Conception, by Murillo, was painted for the chapel of the Hospital of the Afflicted for Women. Eleven other paintings by Murillo hung in the Hospital of Charity. The Hospital of our Lady of Peace, in Seville, a truly magnificent structure, with a frontage of six hundred feet and a depth of five hundred feet, was filled with the most wonderful paintings and statues. In Genoa the public hospital was like a vast castle, and on its walls were hung the sublimest pictures. It possessed, too, one of the masterpieces of Michelangelo. Hundreds of the noted pictures of Florence and Venice are in the hospitals.

6. Why all this lavish expense in the common wards

of the sick? Was it the result of a desire for ostentation? No. For if such had been the motives the great paintings and works of art would have gone to private homes, as they have done in our time. The sick person was a child of God; there was the answer. Nothing was too good, too expensive, too lavish for God's own children. Go into one of our large hospitals today and you will find all the costly furniture, the rugs and pictures, in the offices of the directors; formerly such luxuries were reserved for the sick. Even the paintings in the chapel were primarily for the inmates; for the common wards were connected with the chapel, whose great folding doors were opened to enable even those who were bedridden to follow the services at the altar.

Luther thus wrote of the hospitals in Italy: "The hospitals are well provided and well built, the best food is given, there are attentive servants and skilled physicians, the beds are very clean, and the interior of the building is adorned with fine pictures. When a sick man is brought in, his clothes are taken from him before a notary, who writes down an exact description, that they may be restored to him. He is then given a white dress and placed in a well-made bed in white sheets. Two physicians visit him. Ladies of honor also come, wearing veils, so that no one knows who they are." It has ever been characteristic of the saints and other devout souls to find a holy joy in ministering to the sick. St. Catherine of Siena found time for her daily rounds through the hospital, and was never happier than when engaged in this work of mercy. St. Margaret of Scotland and St. Elizabeth of Hungary considered it their sacred privilege to be companions of the suffering.

7. Rotha Mary Clay gives a complete record[1] of the

[1] *The Medieval Hospitals of England.* Appendix.

foundation of numerous hospitals. Some idea of the number of these institutions may be gathered from the fact that York, with a population of less than fifteen thousand, had twenty hospitals. Thirteen of these were built in the fourteenth century. In each one of the towns or cities hospitals were often erected by guilds, sometimes by the municipality, and frequently by personages of rank, who retained the privilege of sending a few patients in their name. Sometimes the hospitals were supported by endowments, frequently by the yearly contribution of the guild of the town. In Paris the drapers' guild provided bread, meat, and wines for hospitals. The firewood for heating the institutions was frequently donated by some great landlord from his forest preserve. The bill of fare, as given in several histories of hospitals, shows that there was very seldom a want of provisions, although the food then given to the sick would not be considered suitable in hospitals in our time.

In considering the expenses of conducting these numerous institutions it must be remembered that not only the directors and nurses, but most of those who were engaged about the institution gave their service free. In one of the large hospitals in York there were three cooks, bakers, brewers, smiths, and boatmen, together with many servants, all of whom were engaged in looking after the temporal welfare of the patients. The support of the hospitals was not left to haphazard, but, in many of the large institutions at least, the work was thoroughly organized. For instance, the Hotel Dieu in Paris had estates throughout France; and from its farms every week there was collected a certain number of sheep to be slaughtered for the use of the house. One of the large hospitals in Lyons had a country estate from which

was secured meat and vegetables. The great hospital of the Holy Ghost in Rome had a large income from the alms of the faithful, and also possessed lands which had been bestowed upon it by Pope Innocent III. Many of the hospitals in Spain were supported by a special collection taken up at theaters and other places of amusement. Frequently large alms boxes were placed at the entrances of the churches, and the generosity of the people and of the nobility more than enabled the directors of the hospitals to meet the yearly expenses.

8. "Among the officers and servants of the Hotel Dieu at Paris we find enumerated the spiritual superior, confessors, master of the choristers, sacristan, organist, children of the choir, servant for the bell, and porter of the church. The church was under the invocation of St. Christopher, and the form of dress as well as the religious practices used in the abbey of St. Victor were established here. . . . The wards of the sick were generally so contrived that the patients from their beds, without seeing each other, could all see the altar in the great church, so that during their sickness they enjoyed the inestimable consolation of being able to assist daily at the celebration of the divine mysteries.

"We can judge of the consolation provided for the sick by merely observing the number of these devout attendants. In the Hospital of St. Mary at Paris there were eight Sisters of Charity to wait upon fourteen sick persons. In the Hospital of Incurables there were seventy-four persons to attend the patients, four ecclesiastics, four officers, forty-three Sisters of Charity, and twenty-two domestics, which was allowing one attendant to five patients. In the Hotel Dieu, which might receive more than three thousand four hundred sick, the number of religious ladies did not exceed one hundred and fifty,

besides seventy novices. In the Hotel Dieu at Lyons there were one hundred and twenty sisters, and sixty domestics, Brothers of the Cross. In the Hospital of Charity at Paris, which was the chief house of the Hospitalers in France, the proportion of persons assisting to the sick was one to two. There were fifty professed brethren and novices, but these brethren were charged with the affairs of numerous other hospitals of their order in the provinces." [1]

9. That there were order and honesty in conducting these hospitals will be evident from the regulation in regard to the personal property of the patient. The following extract reads like the detailed regulation of a modern hospital. "If the patient has anything of his own, let the warden take charge of it and of his clothes until he is restored to health; then let them be given to him without diminution, and let him depart, unless of his own accord he offer the whole or part to the house. If he die, let his goods be distributed as he hath disposed of them. If he die intestate, let his property be kept for a year, so that if any friend of the deceased shall come and prove that he has a claim upon it, justice may not be denied to him. If no one claim within the year, let it be merged into the property of the hospital."

It is a mistaken idea that scientific nursing is the outgrowth of modern progress. We have medieval hospital records that set forth every detail in the admission and training of nurses. Officials, both lay and religious, took the greatest care in the reception of applicants. When the subjects had given satisfactory proofs of moral character, good health, and mental aptitude, he or she was admitted into a hospital to undergo a long training under the direction of experienced directors. The cere-

[1] *Ages of Faith*, vol. II, p. 497.

Interior of the Hospital of The Holy Spirit, Rome
Seventeenth Century

Museum of the Hospital of The Holy Spirit, Rome

mony of admission was similar to the reception into a religious community. At the expiration of the time of probation, the nurse was received into the religious order or congregation with vows that embraced a life service. It was the dream of Florence Nightingale to found a society for nursing similar to those of the Church; but her ideal remained only a dream, since there were few to coöperate with her in a plan which called for service, not for a few months or years, but for life.

The following prayer, which was recited at the reception of one of the postulants who was to give her life to the care of the sick, shows the spirit with which the future nurse entered upon her work. "O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst deign to put on the covering of our mortality, we beseech the immense abundance of thy goodness, that thou mayst so deign to bless this kind of vestment, which the Church has decreed should be borne by those who renounce the world, as a token of innocence and humility, that this thy servant who shall use it may deserve to put on thee."

10. The spirit of Christian charity which was so manifest in the Middle Ages towards the sick was wonderfully exemplified in the care of the lepers. Leprosy and usury were the two social evils of Europe at this period. For both of these evils preventive as well as curative methods were adopted. Not only every city, but every town and hamlet set aside a small building for the use of the lepers. In the larger communities there were groups of cottages with an adjoining chapel. Every possible care was taken to lessen the suffering of the poor lepers and at the same time to prevent the spread of the terrible disease.

11. We have the authority of no less a writer than Matthew Paris that there were nineteen thousand hospi-

tals constructed for the lepers of Europe during the twelfth century. No doubt many of these were small. Harbledown in England provided for a hundred lepers; Sherburn for sixty-five, London for forty, York for forty, Dover for twenty, Plymouth for twenty, Winchester for eighteen. In some cities and towns there were several small hospitals. It is probable that not all the inmates of these institutions suffered from what is now known as leprosy. The word was then used in a rather elastic form, and anyone afflicted with a skin eruption was classified as a leper. As early as the seventh century lepers were forbidden to marry. "On the outskirts of a town seven hundred years ago the eye of the traveler would have been caught by a well-known landmark — a group of cottages with an adjoining chapel, clustering round a green enclosure. At a glance he would recognize it as the lazarhouse, and would prepare to throw an alms to the crippled and disfigured representatives of the community." [1]

There is an abundance of information in the above citation. It will be noticed, in the first place, that the leper colonies were on the outskirts of the town, and hence that due precaution was taken to prevent the spread of the disease. The "green enclosure" indicates the care which was exercised in selecting sites for leper colonies; a wooded place, and if possible near a stream, was chosen for these unfortunate people. We are further reminded that these institutions were "well-known landmarks," and can gather from these words that they were numerous throughout the country. Again, each place consists of a group of cottages, a proof that the more virulent cases were segregated from those who were not so grievously afflicted. Then there was a chapel as a part of each

[1] Clay, p. 35.

lazarhouse, and the poor afflicted creatures were given all the consolations of religion. Finally, the passage would indicate that all those who came near the place were accustomed to contribute an alms for its support.

12. "After separation the fate of the outcast is irrevocably sealed. Remembering the exhortation, he must never frequent places of public resort, nor eat and drink within the sound of any; he must not speak to them unless they are on the windward side, nor may he touch infants or young folk. Henceforth his signal is the clapper, by which he gives warning of his approach and draws attention to his request. This instrument consisted of tablets of wood, attached at one end with leather thongs, which made a loud click when shaken. In England a bell was often substituted for this dismal rattle. Stow and Holinshed refer to the 'clapping of dishes and ringing of bells' by the lazar. His piteous cry is 'Sum good, my gentyll mayster, for God's sake.' This was the beggar's common appeal; in an Early English Legendary a mesel cries to St. Francis, 'Sum good for godes love.' Compelled to leave home and friends, many a leper thus haunted the highway — his only shelter a dilapidated hovel, his meager fare the scraps put into his dish. To others the lines fell in more pleasant places, for in the hospital pain and privation were softened by kindness." [1]

13. Although hospitals were provided for these unfortunate people, considerable liberty was given to those who were able to leave the institutions. There were general laws in regard to their conduct when they left the hospital. They were not to approach the walls, markets, or taverns, nor could they enter a church. They carried with them a wooden clapper and sometimes

[1] Clay, p. 40.

a bell with which to attract attention. On a tree or a post in front of a house they would leave a dish, which they always carried with them, and would then retire to a considerable distance while the charitable inmates brought them water and provisions. Such generous treatment awaited them along the public highways that lazy and fraudulent people frequently donned the sombre gown and hood of the lepers and lived upon the generosity of the people whom they thus deceived.

14. "The lepers of St. Julian's were allowed to see friends — 'if an honest man and true come there for the purpose of visiting an infirm brother, let him have access to him, that they may mutually discourse on that which is meet' — but no woman was admitted except a mother, sister, or other honest matron. The general public was protected, inmates not being permitted to frequent the highroad or speak to passersby (1344). At the time of the seclusion the leper was forbidden henceforth to enter church, market or tavern. At St. Julian's the mill and bakehouse were likewise forbidden. The statutes of Lynn required that the infirm should not enter the cellar, kitchen, or precincts, but keep the places assigned in church, hall and court. So long as they did not eat or drink outside their own walls, lepers might roam within a defined area. The Reading lepers might never go out without a companion. At Harbledown they might not wander without permission, which was granted for useful business, moderate recreation, and in the event of the grievous sickness or death of the parents and friends.

15. "It has been represented that isolation was non-existent, that lepers and untainted persons lived a common life, eating and sleeping together. This was evidently not the case. The sheriff of Lincoln received orders that at Holy Innocents' 'the chaplains and brethren

are to reside in one house, the lepers by themselves and the sisters by themselves.' The statutes at Ilford and Dover give similar directions. The priests at Sherburn slept apart in a chamber adjoining the church, but the Harbledown staff lacked such accommodations until in 1471 it was ordained that they should henceforth dwell in a clergyhouse — 'a home separate from the sick persons and near to them.'

16. "We now turn from leper asylums to consider the leper himself — a sadly familiar figure to the wayfaring man in the Middle Ages. He wears a sombre gown and cape, tightly closed; a hood conceals his want of hair, which is, however, betrayed by the absence of eyebrows and lashes; his limbs are maimed and stunted so that he can but hobble or crawl; his features are ulcerated and sunken; his staring eyes are unseeing or unsightly; his wasted lips part, and a husky voice entreats help as he 'extends supplicating lazar arms with bell and clap-dish.'

17. "The work of providing for Christ's poor, begun by the great churchman Lanfranc and Gundulf, was carried into the realm of personal service by Queen Maud (about 1101), the Abbot of Battle (before 1171), and Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln (about 1186). Queen Maud is the brightest ornament of the new movement. Like St. Francis of Assisi a century later, she adopted those means for grappling with the evil that none but an enthusiast and a visionary would have taken. Aelred of Reivaulx relates how Prince David visited her and found the house full of lepers, in the midst of whom stood the queen. She washed, dried and even kissed their feet, telling her brother that in so doing she was kissing the feet of the Eternal King. When she begged him to follow her example, he withdrew smiling, afterwards confessing to

Aelred, 'I was sore afraid and answered that I could on no account endure it, for as yet I did not know the Lord, nor had His spirit been revealed to me.' Of Walter de Lucy, the chronicler of Battle Abbey, writes, 'He especially compassionated the forlorn condition of those afflicted with leprosy, whom he was so far from shunning that he frequently waited upon them in person, washing their feet and hands, and, with the utmost cordiality, imprinting upon them the soothing kisses of love and piety.' St. Hugh used to visit in certain hospitals, possibly those at Peterborough and Newark connected with the See or the Mallardy at Lincoln. He would even dwell among the lepers, eating with them and ministering to them, saying that he was inspired by the example of the Saviour and by His teaching concerning the beggar Lazarus. On one occasion, in reply to a remonstrance from his chancellor, he said that these afflicted ones were the flowers of paradise, pearls in the coronet of the Eternal King." [1]

Odile of Cluny embraced a leper and cured him, and at the same time had a vision of Christ. St. Francis, too, embraced a leper and kissed him; and in our own time we have had the wonderful example of Father Damian and his work among the lepers of Molokai.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Why were the sick neglected in pagan civilization?
2. Why did the Jews take more care of the needy than did their gentile neighbors?
3. How did Christianity bring about a change of attitude towards the sick?
4. Were the motives which influenced the builders of hospitals economic, social, or religious?

[1] Clay, p. 49, etc.

5. Would you criticize care of the sick which was based solely on economic motives?

6. Explain the difference of motives in the care of an orphan or a sick person and the care of a wounded animal.

7. Can it be said that the growth of Christianity and the construction of hospitals, or at least the care of the sick, progressed together?

8. Have we anything to learn from the hospital construction of the Middle Ages?

9. What do you understand by the expression, "The sick person was a child of God"?

10. Were there other social institutions throughout Europe besides hospitals?

11. In what sense could the monasteries be called social institutions?

12. Have you ever examined a ward in a modern hospital? In what does it differ from one of the old hospitals?

13. In nursing the sick does theory count more than practice?

14. In the Middle Ages the nurses gave their lives to the work. How did this bring about efficiency?

15. Were there great physicians and surgeons in the Middle Ages? An answer to this question will be found in Dr. Walsh's *The Popes and Science.*

16. How were hospitals supported?

17. Give a general account of the treatment of lepers?

18. Can it be said that the treatment of lepers in the Middle Ages was as scientific as it is at present?

19. What was the extent of leprosy in the Middle Ages?

20. For an answer to the misrepresentation of the treatment of the sick in the Middle Ages consult *The Popes and Science.*

References for Further Study

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CHAPTER VI

THE GUILD SYSTEM

1. The beginning of the guild. 2. Extent of the guild system. 3. The apprentice and the journeyman. 4. Every trade unionized. 5. Social standing of the guild members. 6. The guild and the Church. 7. Social and religious ideals. 8. Civic and religious festivals. 9. Every laborer got the full reward of his toil. 10. Results of the guild system in the prosperity of the people. 11. Extravagance in dress. 12. Public and private baths. 13. Trade and shipping. 14. The influence of wealth on education. 15. Abuses. 16. The decline of the guild system. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. It is impossible to assign any date to the origin of the movement which terminated in the wonderful guild system of Europe. It certainly had no connection with those fraternities which existed among the laboring classes of ancient Rome. When in the year 1381 the city of Stratford-on-Avon was required to render an account of the ordinances of its guilds, and was asked for the date of their foundation, the reply was that their origin went back to a time "whereunto the memory of man reacheth not." The guild system of the Middle Ages, like many other institutions of that time, grew out of the needs and aspirations of the people. It was fostered and developed under the guidance of the Church. It drew its wonderful strength from the fact that it had the sustaining strength of religion to support its very foundation. If it solved, as it did, the difficult economic problems of the day, it was because it recognized the immutable

principles of charity and justice which were given to it by the Church.

2. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the guild life of Europe was perfected. (*a*) Every trade had its guild or union. (*b*) Guild members held an honorable position in the community. (*c*) The guild enjoyed the special blessing and protection of the Church. (*d*) The workman reaped the full benefit of his labor. Great cities, such as we have now, were unknown in the Middle Ages. Many a town in Ohio or Illinois is larger than was London in even the fourteenth century. A city of ten thousand inhabitants ranked high. Let us choose for consideration Bristol, a center of busy trade and commerce. It had less than fifteen thousand people, and yet it could count twenty-six guilds or labor unions. We can well understand how carpenters, masons, and weavers could be formed into a labor union; for there was always a demand for building, while the weavers of England were many, and vied with the more skilled and artistic workers of the Continent. We are not surprised that bakers and tanners were strong in numbers and that butchers and brewers could muster a goodly crowd. Not only were there guilds for the more important trades, but sheep-shearmen and skinners, locksmiths and wire-drawers, hoopers and waxmakers were organized. Most people would be surprised to read that there was a guild for bowers, or makers of bows, and that the arrowmakers had a separate organization of their own.

We gather further data in regard to the number of guilds from an account of the Corpus Christi pageant, given in England in 1415. It is remarkable that no less than forty-eight different guilds took part in that wonderful religious play. Probably not all the guilds were from the same city or community, for, as was customary in

those great pageants, the guild members came from neighboring towns, and vied with one another in the production of religious and spectacular displays. In this remarkable production we find tanners, plasterers, cardmakers, coopers, glovemakers, fishmongers, bookbinders and parchmentmakers, hosiers, spicers, pewtermakers and founders, tylers, goldsmiths, horseshoers, carpenters, bridlemakers, barbers, smiths, plumbers, skinners, cutlers, bakers, cordwainers, bow and arrow makers, couchers, cooks, tilemakers, boilermakers, workers in horsehair, painters, butchers, poulterers, sadlers, glaziers, winemakers, woolpackers, scribes, tailors, potters, drapers and woolen weavers. Lists like the above could be drawn up for every community in England and central Europe. They would show that beyond a doubt every possible trade was organized and that everyone who conducted any kind of business was a member of the guild.

Cornelius Walford, in his book entitled, *Guilds: Their Origin, Constitution, Objects and Later History*, writes: "A more detailed examination has enabled me to compile the following specific enumeration of the wide range of their provident and useful objects: (1) Relief in poverty, (2) sickness, (3) old age; (4) On loss of sight, (5) of limb, (6) of cattle; (7) On fall of a house, (8) For pilgrimages, (9) Fire, (10) Floods, (11) Robbery, (12) Imprisonment, (13) Shipwreck, (14) In temporary pecuniary difficulties, (15) To obtain work, (16) To defend oneself at law, (17) When deaf or dumb, (18) When afflicted with leprosy, (19) Dowries on marriage of females or on their entering a house of religion, (20) Repair of roads and bridges, (21) Repair of churches."

3. The great number of guilds, as numerated above, could not have flourished without skilled workmen; and skilled workmen could be produced only by long and

special training. Such training was secured through a well-organized system of apprenticeship extending from five to seven years. When a young man had chosen the trade which he wished to learn, he made application to a master; and if the latter was willing to receive the applicant, a date was set for the reception of the candidate as an apprentice. It was a solemn ceremony, and the installation took place in the townhall or the guildhall, and was witnessed by guild members. The rules for apprenticeship were read for both the master and the applicant. The master promised to receive the young man into his household, teach him a trade, care for his moral training, and, according to the requirements of some guilds, clothe him. The applicant promised obedience to his instructor and fidelity in mastering the art. The apprentice could be corrected for minor faults and dismissed for serious breaches of conduct or inability to learn the trade.

We find in an old book, *A Christian Admonition*, the high ideals set before both master and apprentice:

"Masters, think of your duties. The apprentice has been entrusted to you by the guild to care for his soul and body according to the laws of God and the corporation. You must account for your apprentice and care for him as if he were your own son. You are not master only to govern others and to do masterwork, but also to govern yourself as Christianity and your trade require. Remember, masters, you must be an example to your wives and children, to your apprentices and servants. No trade or profession can succeed honorably unless the apprentice is early taught to fear God and to be obedient to his master as if he were his father. He must, morning and evening and during his work, beg God's help and protection, for without God he can do nothing; no protec-

tion of men is of avail without the protection of God; on the contrary, it is often even hurtful to the soul. Every Sunday and holy day he must hear mass and a sermon and read good books. He must be industrious and seek not his own glory, but God's. The honor of his master and of his trade he must also seek, for this is holy, and he may one day be a master himself if God wills it and he is worthy of it." [1]

When the years of probation had passed, both master and pupil again appeared before the guild members to prove to the satisfaction of all that they had complied with the rules of the association; and the apprentice was required to give a proof of his proficiency.

At the completion of his apprenticeship the young man became a journeyman. Sometimes he continued to work for the master, and received from him not only food and clothing, but a small wage. He enjoyed a greater liberty than he did as an apprentice, but was still under the supervision of his old guide and instructor. He wore a prescribed dress or uniform and was allowed the privilege of carrying a sword. Each journeyman looked forward to the time when he would become an independent craftsman. As a final preparation for his life's work, he went on a tour of inspection of other cities. He carried with him his society's badge, by which he could be recognized by those of the same guild in every country of Europe. Every guildhostel was opened to receive him; and in each hostel hung a tablet with the names of those masters who needed journeymen. If he did not care to remain in the city, or if there was no work for his special craft, he received sufficient money to pay his way to the next town. Thus the journeyman found friends and companions in every city and became acquainted with

[1] Quoted in Janssen's *History of the German People*, vol. II, p. 20.

the best workmanship of his chosen trade; and when he returned to his own community, he was fully equipped to become a master craftsman.

The position of the apprentice and journeyman under that guild system and under the present day capitalistic system is well described by Professor Kelsey. He writes:

"Under the old regime, the apprentice worked with the master, lived with the master's family, perhaps married the master's daughter, and became in time the master himself. Now the child entering into industry enters a dead-end profession in the main, which makes no particular appeal to his emotions. He no longer sees the whole process of production from the creation of the raw material to its final form in finished goods. As he grows older, he becomes the hand, not the creator. He finds a great gulf fixed between the working and directing groups, and as on the railroads, discovers that he has infinitely greater chance of being killed than of becoming an official. The old sharing of returns is replaced by wages, with whose determination he has little to do save to accept or to refuse. The interests of employer and employee seem to diverge, the old personal bonds are lost, antagonism replaces cooperation, and the vast problems of labor and capital arise." [1]

4. Every trade was unionized. It was the great day of union labor — something that the world had never seen before and which it may never witness again. We wish to note in passing that even in pagan times in Egypt and Rome there were unions of laborers; but when we recall that manual work was considered a disgrace in those countries and was largely relegated to the slave,

[1] *How Progress Causes Social Problems*, by Dr. Carl Kelsey, University of Pennsylvania Lectures, 1914-15, p. 14.

we can readily understand that labor unions brought to their members but few privileges or blessings.

Not only was the craftsman a member of a union, but he carried on his trade in a certain section of the city. He had special regulations and advantages in the purchase of raw material; his wares were inspected before they could be offered for sale; and a price was set which insured a sane profit, but made profiteering impossible. It was the pride of each guild to turn out only the best products, and fines were imposed for careless work or adulteration of the output.

One of the punishments for those who produced shoddy or adulterated goods was the "basket." Near each city where there was a river or pond of muddy water was a huge basket, suspended from a long beam as were the well buckets of a century ago. When a guildman was convicted of any dishonesty in his commercial relations, he was seized by the angry crowd. The great bell in the guild tower was rung, and all knew at once the merriment which awaited the spectators. To the pond the victim was rushed, in the huge basket he was tied, and then up and down into the water and out he was thrust until he begged for mercy and promised never again to cheat his fellow townsmen.

5. The labor unions of today are wonderful institutions and are accomplishing great things for their members; but no one will claim that the laborer holds a place of honor or influence in the community. Positions of honor go to the rich. The laborer has been dethroned. During the time of which we write, when all labor was unionized, the laborer was the honored person of the community. His guild hall was one of the pride objects of the city. He was consulted on every civic improvement or display; and he supplied the funds for all such

public movements. Somewhere there was a king or lord to whom he owed allegiance, but such a ruler was far away, and he, the craftsman, was the real ruler in his own municipality.

6. Let us turn to another phase of the laborer's life in the Middle Ages — namely, his close association with religion. At that time, happily, there was but one religion, and a solidarity which we cannot hope for in the present state of religious chaos. Every guild had its patron saint and its chapel or altar in some church. The new member, after his years of training as an apprentice and his probation as a journeyman, was admitted into the guild by an inspiring religious ceremonial. He was impressed by the dignity of the honor which was being conferred upon him. His membership was something honorable in the estimation of men and something sacred in the eyes of the Church. Christ had sanctified and ennobled labor, for as a youth and a man He had worked with His foster father, St. Joseph, at the humble task of a carpenter. He had chosen poor workmen to be the messengers of His Church. Never again would it be a disgrace to work. The old pagan conception of labor, as something menial and fit only for slaves, was gone forever. It was an honorable thing to work at a trade. Work had been sanctified by the hallowed touch of the hands of Christ, God and Man. Who would dare call work a disgrace? Such was the idea held up before the new member of a guild. On church festivals the members came in their peculiar regalia to their church or altar, or watched with civic and religious pride the members of other guilds celebrating a feast or patron's day. At times they united in one great civic or religious demonstration. Patron saints' days and other feasts of the Church were many during the Middle Ages. There was not the wild rush

for money and luxuries as we witness it today, but there was more time for prayer and church services.

The religious character of the guilds and the faith which bound the members together are evident from the rules of the associations. The meetings always began with prayer. The following is from the statutes of the Fraternity of St. Christopher, established in Norwich in 1384:

"In the worship of Jesus Christ, and of His dear Mother, and of St. Christopher the holy martyr, and all holy hallows, devoutly we begin this fraternity by these ordinances underwritten:

"In the beginning ye shall pray devoutly for the state of the holy Church and for the peace of the land; for the Pope of Rome and his cardinals, for the patriarchs of Jerusalem; for the Holy Land and the Holy Cross, that God of His might and mercy bring it out of heathen power into the rule of holy Church; and that God of His mercy make peace and unity in holy Church; and for all bishops and archbishops, and specially for our bishop of Norwich; for all persons and priests, and all orders of holy Church, that God of His mercy save them and keep them, body and soul, and give them grace here order to keep, and so to rule holy Church and man's soul that it be to God's worship and salvation of their souls, and to all Christian men; for our Lord the king, for our lady the queen; dukes, earls, and barons of the land, that God of His grace save them and keep them from deadly sin, give them grace the realm and holy Church and their own souls so to rule and keep that it be worship to God and to all Christian men salvation; for all knights, squires, citizens and burgesses, all the tillers and men of craft, widows, maidens, wives, and for all the commonalty and Christian people, that God of His mercy save

them and keep them that in this world live with truth, and give them grace so to do that it be worship of God and salvation to their souls; for all true shipmen and true pilgrims, that God for His grace give them good weather and passage, that they may safely come and go; for the fruit of the land and of the sea and the weather; for all men that be in false belief and would be in good belief, God give them grace to come to their desire; for our fathers' souls and mothers, brethren and sisteren, and for all the brethren and sisteren of this guild, and for all Christian souls. Amen." [1]

In the statutes of the guild of St. Mary in Beverley, founded in 1355, it is provided that "every year, on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Mary, all the brethren and sisters shall meet together in fit and appointed place, away from the church; and there one of the guild shall be clad in comely fashion as a queen, like to the glorious Virgin Mary, having what may seem a son in her arms; and two others shall be clad like to Joseph and Simeon; and two shall go as angels, carrying a candle-bearer, on which shall be twenty-four thick wax lights. With these and other great lights borne before them, and with much music and gladness, the pageant Virgin with her Son, and Joseph and Simeon, shall go in procession to the church. And all the sisters of the guild shall follow the Virgin, and afterwards all the brethren; and each of them shall carry a wax light weighing half a pound. And they shall go two and two, slowly pacing to the church; and when they have got there, the pageant Virgin shall offer her son to Simeon at the high altar; and all the sisters and brethren shall offer their wax lights, together with a penny each. All this having been

[1] *Our Lady's Dowry*, T. D. Bridget, chap. 12; Burns & Oates, London.

solemnly done, they shall go home again with gladness. . . .

"On the same day, after dinner, the brethren and sisters shall meet together, and shall eat bread and cheese and drink ale, rejoicing in the Lord, in praise of the glorious Virgin Mary. . . . The alderman and stewards of the guild shall visit those brethren and sisters who are poor, ailing, or weak, and who have not enough of their own to live upon; and they shall give to these as they think right out of the guild stock, viz., to each one eightpence, sixpence, or at least fourpence, every week, to help their needs. And if any of those poor brethren die, or any other of the guild who is not well off, he shall be buried at the cost of the guild, and have all becoming services." [1]

The book entitled *A Christian Admonition* says:

"Let the societies and brotherhoods so regulate their lives according to Christian love in all things that their work may be blessed. Let us work according to God's law, and not for reward, else shall our labor be without blessing and bring evil on our souls. Men should work for the honor of God, who has ordained labor as our lot, and in order to gain the reward of industry which lies in each one's inner soul. He should labor in order to gain for himself and his family the necessaries of life and what will contribute to Christian joy, and moreover in order to assist the poor and sick by the fruits of his labors. Thus will the brotherhoods and trade societies accomplish good. He who, acting otherwise, seeks only the pecuniary recompense of his work does ill, and his labors are but usury." [2]

8. On Church festivals and civil holidays guild members planned every detail of the celebration. It was they

[1] *Id.* c. 12. [2] Janssen, vol. II, p. 9.

who claimed as their right the places of honor. All the city turned out to see a guild seek to outdo its rivals on festive occasions. All the enjoyment of the people was centered around the guilds; the guilds regulated everything, took part in everything. Year in to year out every member of a guild was planning some entertainment, or witnessing the production of a rival guild, or discussing the mystery plays of the past months or the promised festivities of the future. The whole civic and social life of the community centered around the Church and the guild, and the guild member was the honored man of the community; which is only another way of stating that the workmen of those days were the leaders in religious, social, and civic life.

"The public consideration in which the guild members were held was apparent in their particular festive customs, which added so much to the public amusements always so popular. For instance, the companions of the shoemakers' guild in Nuremburg held annually a 'bath walk.' During the carnival they met at the guild inn and marched in white bath cloaks and hats, accompanied by fife and drum, through the city to the public baths and back to their inn, where they regaled themselves. The other trades went in similar processions in characteristic dress. The coopers danced their hoop dance in red cotton stockings, fine white shirts, and green Hungarian caps with bands on the side. In Hamburg the brewers celebrated every two years what they called the 'hoge,' which lasted full eight days, and consisted of public processions, dancing and sports. The most interesting of these festivals was that of the bakers of Freiburg. The chapel of their sodality was in the Hospital of the Holy Spirit. On New Year's Day they assembled in the meeting room of the hospital whence they went

in procession through the town carrying an enormous cake (brezel). A beautifully dressed Christmas tree was shaken by the oldest member for the poor, who gathered up the cakes and fruits that fell from it. Wine was distributed, and the day was closed with dancing. Festivals of this kind imparted to the manners of the Middle Ages a singularly joyous and picturesque character, and strengthened the social spirit of the people. They brought the working classes before the public, and thus stimulated their self-respect. As everyone took part in them, they had the effect of drawing the different classes nearer to each other." [1]

Jane Addams, in her book, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, writes: "In the medieval city the knights held their tourneys, the guilds their pageants, the people their dances, and the Church made festival for its most cherished saints with gay street processions, and presented a drama in which no less a theme than the history of creation became a matter of thrilling interest. Only in the modern city have men concluded that it is no longer necessary for the municipality to provide for the insatiable desire for play." It is hard to overestimate the bonds of unity among the workmen of those days. They labored at the same trade, conducted business along the same street, met at the same guild house, fought together for the defense of their city, walked together in the same religious procession, took part in the same mystery play, prayed together before the same altar, and were not forgetful of each other when death claimed a member of the guild.

9. There is one feature of guild life which makes a special appeal to the workman of our day. If this workman is a member of a union and has given attention to

[1] *Id.* p. 26.

the perplexing question of wages, he will be in a good position to understand what guild life brought to its participants in the Middle Ages. Let us take the example of a shoe factory which employs a thousand men and women. The employees realize that the profits go to others, often to absentee stockholders. Let us suppose that conditions are changed and that the entire plant is owned and operated by those who do the work. The directors may receive a bonus for their ability to manage the plant. There may be some few workmen who claim an extra wage owing to their skill, but aside from these concessions, all the profits are divided equally among the operators. Every man is getting the full benefit of his labor. He is working with his associates only to secure those results which come from cooperation; but he is a partner in the factory. The records are open before him; he receives his portion of the profits of the large concern. This is a picture that seems ideal. If the system could be introduced at present it would solve the most difficult labor problems which our age confront.

Let us turn to the shoemakers' guild of the Middle Ages, and we shall find that the ideal conditions which we vainly seek at present existed in hundreds of centers in those remote days. Let us choose a city in central Europe, and a section of the city where shoes were made; for generally each trade had its own locality. Each master shoemaker conducted his own business, with the assistance of apprentices and journeymen. These two classes of men were satisfied with their condition, because they were preparing themselves to take their places as master shoemakers. Let us then consider the masters. They had certain regulations for the purchase and distribution of leather. Their wares were inspected by authorized

officers. The sale was so regulated that it brought a fair profit, yet profiteering was made impossible. Each master workman was independent; he was not a tool in the hands of others; he received the full benefit of his own toil and industry. From the economic point of view this was a great advantage which the guild systems of the Middle Ages rendered to their workmen.

10. What was the outcome of this organization of labor? We would naturally expect to find skilled workmen and a great increase in wealth. This is precisely what resulted in the guild system. We have ample testimony that throughout the whole of central Europe there was a wonderful increase of wealth and a proportionate increase in the temporal betterment of the lives of the people. We are accustomed to point to the cathedrals of the Middle Ages as the only proof of the progress and skill of those times. It is true that the great cathedrals, owing to their size and strength, have survived the destructive elements of time and war; but the student who has the opportunity to search through the ancient cities of Europe will find thousands of dwellings dating back to those remote times.

With increase of wealth, then, came a decided improvement in every phase of the lives of the people. Aeneas Sylvius, speaking of Vienna, says: "The houses of the burghers are roomy and richly decorated, built of freestone, with high, stately facades, painted within and without. The doors are mostly sheeted with iron and the windows glazed; they look like princely palaces." In 1497 Froissart bore the same testimony in regard to the cities and private dwellings which he saw in central Europe, where he witnessed a general prosperity,— "the magnificence of their public buildings and the beauty and luxury of their homes. The new Gothic art enriched

the new medieval town with a splendor of buildings hitherto unknown, which symbolizes the growth of material prosperity as well as the keener artistic appreciation. . . . The development of domestic architecture is still more significant than the growth of ecclesiastical and military buildings. Stone houses were no longer the rare luxuries of Jews and nobles." Again, Sylvius, in describing the lives of the people, refers to the "luxury of their clothing and the silver utensils of their tables. He inquired of Martin Mayer, chancellor of Mayence, "How it is that in your inns you always serve drinks in silver vessels? Where is the woman — I do not speak of the nobility, but of the bourgeoisie — who does not glitter with gold?" [1]

11. Human nature was the same then as now, and with this great increase in wealth came extravagance. "In the year 1485 the Council of Ratisbon, wishing to lessen the growing extravagance, made the following rules in regard to dress: 'The distinguished wives and daughters of burghers shall be allowed eight dresses, six cloaks, three dancing dresses, and one plaited mantle having three sets of sleeves, of velvet, brocade or silk; two pearl hair bands not costing more than twelve florins, a tiara of gold and pearls worth five florins, not more than three veils costing eight florins each, a clasp not having more than one ounce of gold; silk fringe to their dresses, but not gold or pearl; a pearl necklace not costing more than five florins, two rows of pearl around the sleeves at five florins per ounce, a gold chain and pendant worth fifteen florins, and a necklace for twenty florins.' Except the engagement or marriage ring, none were permitted costing more than twenty-four florins. Three or four rosaries were allowed, but they were not to cost more

[1] *Id.* p. 59.

than ten florins; sashes of silk and embroidery were not to exceed three florins." [1]

12. Personal cleanliness is certainly one of the indications of the social condition of a people; and judged from this standard the communities of central Europe, especially during the latter part of the Middle Ages, vie with later periods which claim a greater social advancement. "The number of bathing houses in every city, in which the working classes could bathe either gratuitously or for a very small payment, was very great. Dating from the end of the thirteenth century, the city of Lubeck had a bathhouse in almost every street; in Ulm, at the close of the Middle Ages, there were eleven public bathhouses; in Nuremburg twelve, in Frankfort at least fifteen, and in Vienna twenty-nine. Every market, borough and village was provided with its public bathhouse. It was the custom for the laborers every Saturday to go and take a bath. Hence the custom of the journeymen leaving off work earlier than usual Saturday evening; and several guilds had a special fund for bath money, to which the members were entitled on the completion of their task.

"The school ordinance of Nauburg decreed in 1480 that the children should be taken to the baths in the middle of the week, because on Saturday they were monopolized by adults. Neither were the poor excluded from the benefits of the mineral waters. We find written in a chronicle of 1488: 'From the most ancient times the sick poor were allowed free entrance to the baths of Baden-Baden for the love of God.' Besides the public bathhouses many private residences had baths for the use of the household and house tenants. . . . The 'bath

[1] *Id.* p. 64.

linen' formed a very important item in the outfit of every respectable laborer's wife." [1]

13. At the close of the fifteenth century German ports rivaled in shipping the cities of Genoa and Venice. The Hanse had houses in all the ports of Holland and England; it traded with France and Spain and Italy. So much wealth had come to central Germany owing to her splendid guild system, that there of very necessity arose wonderful shipping companies which carried the German produce to the distant ports of the Levant.

The German merchants were known abroad not only for their great wealth but for their extravagance. They entertained their friends with such prodigality that the Spaniards and Italians wondered at their accumulated wealth, and were surprised to find their tableware of silver and gold. No other nation at the close of the fifteenth century could boast of such untold wealth as could Germany.

14. The wealth and education of Germany, and in fact of the greater part of central Europe, was shown in the wonderful production of books which followed immediately upon the invention of printing. For more than half a century German printers monopolized the trade. They were found in great numbers in the principal cities of Spain and Italy, and their presses were operated from London to Constantinople. They were the first to print the Italian edition of Dante; thirty thousand copies of Thomas à Kempis came from their presses; and edition after edition of the Bible was printed, not only in the Latin, but in most of the European tongues. It is simply startling to learn how many copies of the Bible were printed prior to the year 1500. We have the record of 156 complete copies of the Latin Bible,

[1] *Id.* p. 34-36.

seventeen of the German, eleven of the French, seven of the Italian, while the other languages could claim from one to six complete editions. Later on, when religious animosity clouded the minds of people and dishonest historians wrote history not to record truth but to spread error, it was claimed that the Church had suppressed the printing of the Bible and that Luther with difficulty obtained his first copy. The answer to this is that Luther was a professor of Scripture long before his break with Rome, and that the printing of the Bible fairly monopolized the presses of Europe for the first fifty years after the invention of printing. Many of these copies of the Bible, like those from the Koberger press, were artistically printed, and illustrated with wood cuts which would be a credit to our own day.

15. We do not argue for a return of those days; nor do we conceal the fact that there were abuses. There were strikes for higher pay on the part of journeymen, and contentions for places of distinction in civic and religious festivals. Shoddy cloth was sold, and putrified fish were found on the market despite the methods of inspection and punishment. Still the workman continued to hold a high and honorable place in society.

16. The one point on which we wish to insist is that the Church, at a time when she was most powerful, was the friend of the guild. We do not claim that the Church inaugurated the guild movement. She encouraged it, she blessed it; she threw around it everything which tended to make membership in a guild something to be proud of. The guilds of the Middle Ages owed their honorable distinction and their spirit of fair dealing and brotherly love to the teaching and inspiration of the Church. When the Church was rent asunder by heresy and unbelief in central Europe and England, guild life

perished; and in France, where the power of the Church was lessened by the state, guilds lost their spirit and became closed organizations which restricted membership and extorted high prices.

With the exception of religion, the guilds were the most far-reaching social force of the Middle Ages. We shall pause here and view the artistic work of the members and study the effects of the organizations on the social lives of the people. We are apt to look to the Gothic cathedrals as proofs of the ideals and skill of the workmen of those days, for the great church buildings, by their very size and strength, have come down to us as the outstanding memorials of their time; but investigators have produced other evidences of workmanship, in the most delicate fabrics of tapestry, glass, wood, and metal. We have chosen two writers to give to students an account of the artistic output of the guild members — Janssen and Cram. The former, who has been quoted throughout this chapter, investigated documents which were little known to our English-speaking people; and the latter stands a peer among writers on this period. While they describe the home and its furnishings, they also give a picture of home life — and that is the ideal social life.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. How many guilds were there in the larger cities and towns?
2. Mention some of the trades for which there were guilds.
3. Mention some of the works of charity connected with guilds.
4. Did the Church inaugurate the guild movement?
5. How did the Church influence guild life?
6. What were some of the social festivities of the guild?
7. How were apprentices formed?
8. How did the journeyman differ from the apprentice?
9. Read the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on guilds and compare it with the article in some other encyclopedia.

10. How did the guild member get the full value of his work?
11. Could we introduce the guild into present working conditions?
12. How did the guilds differ from present labor unions?
13. What can labor unions learn from guilds?
14. In a shoe factory where a thousand persons are employed how does the division of profits differ from that of the guild system?
15. Do you think that guild members were more interested in their work than the members of present-day labor unions? Why?
16. Did the guilds produce great wealth?
17. Was wealth more evenly divided? What were the social effects of this division?
18. How did the guilds produce social equality and contentment?
19. Had the apprentice under the guild system a better opportunity for advancement than in our day?
21. How was true religious spirit shown in guild life?
20. How was labor ennobled and dignified under the Church and by the guild?
22. Did the guilds produce skilled and artistic workers?
23. What proof has come down to our day of this skill?
24. Doctor Walsh claims that the thirteenth was the greatest of centuries. What other centuries would most favorably compare with the thirteenth or surpass it?

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CHAPTER VII

THE CRAFT GUILDS OF THE MIDDLE AGES
Continued

Work of the Guilds as Shown in the Gothic Cathedrals[1]

1. Characteristics of the thirteenth century. 2. Elements of Gothic architecture — cohesion, economy, and character. 3. The culmination of a great age. 4. The potential force of the Gothic. 5. The great cathedral of Notre Dame. 6. Apocalyptic splendor of Chartres. 7. Coutances, Amiens, and Reims. 8. Reims a radiant apotheosis. 9. The beauties of Amiens. 10. Other phases of Medieval culture. 11. English Gothic.

1. Great as was the thirteenth century in constructive statesmanship, in the fixing of the principles and the laws of civil liberty, in philosophy, and in the development of all the arts (whether the old arts of painting and sculpture and poetry or the new of stained glass, hymnology, illumination), its achievement in architecture was in some ways the most notable, perhaps because what happened there epitomizes all that was done elsewhere, and the nature of what was accomplished is precisely that which informed the whole body of Medieval achievement.

2. Nearly all the structural elements of Gothic already had been brought into being; what remained was the Gothicizing of it all, the giving it essential Gothic quality. This may, I think, be divided under three heads, Cohe-

[1] From *The Substance of Gothic*, by Ralph Adams Cram. Marshall Jones Company, Boston. pp. 136-156. Reprinted with the permission of the author and publishers.

sion, Economy and Character. The first means knitting everything together synthetically, giving it a certain dynamic power to grow from within outward in accordance with clear laws and under one impulse, and finally making the structure itself, not only efficient as such, but beautiful in itself, the central fact and force in the style, all ornament of every kind being something added, but growing inevitably from it. Economy means the discovery of physical forces, using them in such a way that they work either together or in intelligent and effective opposition, so making possible the reduction of columns, walls, arches, buttresses, vaults, to a logical minimum, but always with regard to that optical minimum which prevented a reduction in bulk below a certain point, even if a further diminution would be structurally safe, since the mind must be satisfied, through the eye, and the physical test could not be considered as final. Character is the hardest thing to define, but in a way the most significant. It is the quality that makes a thing Gothic whether its structural system is of the perfectly developed type or not. It is what the glass of Chartres, the sculpture of Amiens, the pictures of Giotto, the Hora Novissima, the High History of the Holy Grail, all possess in common with the great cathedrals, and in so full a degree that they may all be called Gothic, or Medieval, or if you like Catholic. Singly and together they are the creation and the expression of the one epoch when Catholicism interpenetrated all life to such an extent that no single portion of society except the Jews, the Mohammedans, and the as yet unconverted tribes of Prussia, were outside its scope or beyond its influence and control. Character means for us difference in quality, and this is both material and spiritual. Saint Georges de Boscherville has, for example, almost as many Gothic elements

in its construction as the cathedral of Sens, but the one is essentially Norman in character, the other just as essentially Gothic. The character of the mouldings in Cerisy is of one type, that of Noyon absolutely different, and the same is true of the scheme, the material, and the detail of design. The ornament of the later Norman and Romanesque is rich and elaborate beyond Gothic comparison, until the fifteenth century, but it differs as completely from that of Chartres or Amiens or Lincoln as it does, on the other hand, from that of Greece. The placing of ornament, also is wholly different, and a new theory of composition grows out of a new energy.

3. What is it that determined all this, and in thirty years gave to architecture a new character that it retained for nearly three centuries? It is, I think, that sudden achievement, by certain peoples, of their majority. Into the golden chalice of life are poured, from a score of flagons, the streams of living water; little by little the chalice brims higher and higher, and at last — at one moment it is full but continent, at the next it overflows. Blood of the North, religious fervor and devotion, a new and fine economic system, a stimulating philosophy, liberal education, personal freedom, sense of honor, chivalry, service, all assemble to the filling of the cup, and between 1150 and 1175 it brims to the full, runs over, and a new stylistic epoch in architecture is accomplished.

Behind and through it all is the new humanism. Our Lady and the saints are friends and defenders, and their service is the pleasure and the duty of chivalry. The world is seen to be very beautiful, with its flowers and its birds and kind little beasts of the woods. Personal allegiance and friendship, and an almost mystical reverence for women bind all kinds and classes with close bonds. Men are free, and as freemen, brave and laborious; the

guilds make all work honorable and give each man his chance of self-expression and emulation. All environment is beautiful, all costumes full of life and color, men are imbued with the beauty and the splendor of religious and secular ceremonial, ugly things disappear and more and more lovely things take their place. Unconsciously men have come to like good things, and the race — not the patron, the amateur, or the isolated artist, — expresses its own and intimate self.

4. At St. Denis and Sens, Gothic architecture had shown itself in all its potential force; from them we go straight to Notre Dame in Paris; for here, working from east to west, we can see the process of complete development.

The great church was begun in 1163, only twenty years after St. Denis, the choir of course coming first, and the work gradually extending itself westward until the facade with its towers was finished in its present state in 1235. The plan is fine, clear, and well articulated, but the vertical order is and was defective. It follows the Norman Abbaye aux Hommes and has a lofty vaulted gallery in place of the low triforium of the Abbaye des Dames, and is in this sense inferior to the somewhat earlier Sens where the triforium is of very great beauty. In Notre Dame, again, cylindrical columns are used for the new arcade throughout, the vaulting shafts resting on their caps. I have never understood why this device — a distinct retrogression in point of articulation — should be so much admired by critics. At Sens this topping of the vault shafts occurs only on the intermediate columns, which is admirable, since there the scheme is alternating and the vault sexpartite, the piers carrying the transverse ribs, and therefore the major part of the weight, perfectly expressing their function by being

divided into five colonettes, each of which takes a member of the group of vault ribs, grounding them all solidly at the pavement. The perfect system is of course that at Chartres, and almost invariable thereafter, i.e. a smaller circular shaft with four attached colonettes, one reaching from floor to vault and carrying the transverse rib, one performing the same function in the aisle, with those on either side taking the inner ring of the moulded arches of the arcade. The colonettes that take the diagonal ribs of the high vault are either stopped on the top of the arcade cap, or better still at the base course of the triforium, while the longitudinal ribs find their support at the clerestory level.

5. The nave must have been finished about 1196, and in 1210 the west front was begun and completed in fifteen years. About 1230 there was a serious conflagration, and at that time the novel but unbeautiful round windows above the triforium in each bay were cut out to allow the lengthening of the clerestory windows, and at the same time the original and fine scheme of double buttressing in the chevet was abandoned for the irrational and inorganic flying buttreses leaping both aisles, and grieving the logician as much as they excite the admiration of the tourist. These same preposterous buttresses are one of the first evidences of the inevitable danger that lurked in the scientific proficiency of the French, who were always trying for some new structural wonder and only desisted when Beauvais, which they had pushed even beyond the limits of reason, collapsed in ruin, and, after an humiliating bolstering up by additional supports, remained a vast fragment as the monument to overriding ambition. Impossible as they are, these buttresses, or rather these buttress pinnacles, are examples of the most exquisite detail to be found in the style, and here again we find a

premonition of the fate in store when the integrity of construction was lost and Gothic became the riot of marvellous decoration that is called Flamboyant.

Between 1245 and 1250 the nave chapels between the buttresses were constructed — another error in judgment — and the transepts were pushed outward a bay, while at the very end of the century the apsidal chapels were built, the ambulatory originally having no chapels whatever. Notre Dame stands as a living record, therefore, of all stages of Gothic during its first period, but no portion can match the west front which marks the culmination of the style. It is perhaps the noblest architectural conception of man, classical in its simplicity, its matchless proportions, the brilliancy of its design, the perfect scale of its detail, the subtle rhythm of its delicate variations.

6. Amongst the other great cathedrals essentially of the twelfth century we find Noyon, Laon, Senlis, Poitiers, Bourges, and Chartres. It is impossible to describe them now, for each deserves a lecture by itself. Infinite in their variety, they are all under the same inspiration. Laon has its perfectly proportioned plan and its great scheme of seven clustering spires; Soissons has its wonderful south transept which Porter calls "one of the most ethereal of all twelfth century designs and the highest expression of that fairy-like, Saracenic phase of Gothic art that had first come into being at Noyon." As for Bourges, it is unique, and to me, the finest Gothic interior in the world, with its vast, transeptless nave, its five aisles, and its pyramidal system of arching that lifts the nave arcade half as high again in proportion as in any other church, its glimmering forest of shafts vanishing above in luminous shadows. Chartres of course remains in the end the noblest work of Gothic art, even though

almost every other church excels it in some single point. In spite of the bewigged canons of the eighteenth century who desecrated its choir with cheap imitation marbles and its sanctuary with a riotous high-altar that looks like a Broadway burlesque, and then smashed some of the matchless windows in order that the world might see the results of their stupendous crime — in spite of this, Chartres remains less wrecked within by bigotry, revolution, the vulgarity of the eighteenth and the restorations of the nineteenth century, than any other of the great cathedrals, and it still retains the vast majority of its original glass, which is to this art what the west front of Notre Dame is to architecture — its final, perfect, and divinely inspired word. Add to this blazing vesture of apocalyptic splendor the south tower of the west front, an unparalleled model of serene design, inscrutable proportions, and just composition; the porches of the transepts, which have no prototypes, no rivals, no possible successors, but stand as the revelation through some unknown master-masons of all that is final in inspired design, and finally the sculpture, west, north, south, which leaves no further word to be said in the sensitive adaptation of this art to architecture,— combine all these and add a certain poignant spiritual aroma of the chanted worship and the old incense and the ascended prayers of seven centuries, and you have a thing that almost transcends experience.

7. The thirteenth century goes on from Bourges and Chartres without a break to Coutances, Amiens, and Reims. It goes on to innumerable other masterpieces as well, in England, Flanders, Spain, for despite the many small nationalities, perhaps because of them, Europe was practically an unity, fashioned, expressed, and made active through diversity. In France, however,

perfection was most closely approached, and national, individual, stimulating as they are, the Gothic monuments of all these peoples never quite approached Chartres, Bourges, Coutances, Amiens, and Reims in perfect organism, in perfect beauty, and in the indissoluble union of the two. In these masterpieces the progress of development from the simple to the complex, from the almost rudimentary norm of the Athenian temple, each portion of which was perfected to finality, on to the Catholic cathedral of the thirteenth century, where the norm is in itself complex and each detail raised almost to the level of Hellenic perfection, is steady and unbroken, and at Reims we could see, only two years ago, the triumph of final achievement.

Coutances is not French Gothic, it is Norman Gothic, just as the same art in England — barring Westminster — is Norman by descent. There is a great difference in this, and one that always should be regarded, for it marks a great divergence and lessens the contrast so often drawn between, for example, Lincoln and Bourges. Coutances has the might and majesty of the work of Lanfranc, with the central tower so typically Norman and English. On the other hand its verticality is stupendous; it soars into the air with a swiftness and clarity of line almost without equal. The French cathedral does not do this: there is in it nothing ponderous, nothing earth-bound, but it seems to rise with a certain self-controlled majesty, expressing only its splendid logic and its magisterial calm. Coutances is like a troop of lifting spears, light, strong, exultant, and its effect comes from conscious design in form, not through wealth of fretted ornament, for of this there is little enough. As the chief monument of Norman Gothic it is a church that well deserves to be better known than it is.

8. It is as hard to speak of Reims as of the loved and newly dead. For every architect it had come to be the epitome of his art, the Parthenon of Christian architecture. For every friend of France, every devotee at the shrine of immortal history, it stood as a radiant apotheosis. For those who still hold by Christianity it was a holy place, with a dim yet penetrating sanctity that silently conquered all doubt, all denial, all derision. There was none other quite like it; not St. Peter's, nor Hagia Sophia; not even Westminster. The insolence of heresy, the brutishness of revolution, the smug self-complacency of restoration had stripped it of its altars, its shrines, its tombs of unnumbered kings, but even the destroyers had venerated its lofty majesty and respected its integrity, while the wars of six centuries had swept around its unscathed walls, impotent for evil in the light of its stainless glory.

For two years it has lain under the fitful storming of shell and shrapnel, doomed to slow death because it is the crowning symbol of a great culture that is an offence to modernism in arms, and of a spirit in man and over man that may not be allowed to exist in the same world with its potent negation. The glass that rivalled Chartres is splintered in starry dust on the blood-stained pavement and its fragments made the settings in soldiers' rings. Its vault is burst asunder by bombs, its interior calcined by conflagration, the incredible sculptures of its portals blasted and burned away. Yet it stands in its infinite majesty, gaunt and scathed in a circle of ruin, still the majestic fabric of a great people, a great epoch, a consummate art.

It was the crowning monument, in material form, of Christian civilization; so perfect in all its parts that it was perhaps too perfect, as being more than man should

be permitted to attain, an infringement on the creative power of God. Beyond this was nothing greater, and in Amiens, which is chronologically but a few years younger, we already begin to feel the working of that pride of life and vainglory of conscious competence that forebodes the beginning of the decline.

9. To most travelers, I suppose, Amiens is the most beautiful cathedral in France, the perfection of fully developed Gothic. Certainly its towering interior, taller in proportion to its width than anything yet accomplished, is awe-inspiring; its sculptures are quite by themselves in their vivacity, their masterly design, and their subtle delicacy of execution. The west front, wholly without stylistic consistency and dating from many periods is lyric poetry done into stone. There is no other Gothic front quite like this in its pictorial composition, its wealth of intricate design (as rich as the masterpieces of the Flamboyant period without their lace-like texture and their irrational fantasticism), its marvellous carved ornament which is undeniably the most varied, original, and exquisite of any church in the world. In spite of this there is something lacking, or rather something added that should not be there. Very hiddenly, very unwholesomely, human pride is asserting itself above the solemn devotion of Chartres, the serene Christian confidence of Reims. Logic is winning the mastery, structural engineering is eating into architectural integrity. Higher and more tenuous the slim shafts lift themselves from the pavement; in the marvellous chevet stone is pared away until the thin masonry is like a perilous scaffolding; every foot of wall between buttresses gives place to the airy tracery of great windows, and the vault itself soars in the air as though held down by the taut pull of the colonettes instead of resting on them as on its natural supports.

Of course the painted glass is nearly all gone, if it ever existed, and the vast interior, whitened by lamentable restorations, is a dizzy blaze of intolerable light. Were these crystal walls glowing with the transcendental splendor of Chartres, or with the glory that was Reims, our judgment might be different, for then Amiens would be the fulfilment of the dream of its daring creators, where now it is little more than the white ashes of burnt out fires. So great is the part played in Medieval architecture by this art of glass, created then out of nothing to add a new joy to life, a new wonder to the body of universal art. No church where sacrilege has extinguished this flame of life — and they are the vast majority in every land — should be judged as it stands any more than you would venture to estimate the value of the Brahm's Requiem from an orchestral performance from which the voices of the soloists and chorus were excluded, or the Fifth Symphony without the violins. With our taste hopelessly debased by the catastrophe products of glass-makers in the nineteenth century, we naturally cannot understand the part played of old by this triumphant art, unless we have seen for ourselves the miracle of Chartres with its glass so providently preserved.

In any case, however, the lurking peril was there; not salient, not vociferous enough to injure its perfection, not sufficiently visible to serve even as a warning, but the next stage was the chevet of Le Mans, and the final stage was Beauvais, and through these we can trace the first evidences of decadence back to Amiens, still serene in its perfect mastery.

10. I have left myself scant space, indeed I have left no space at all, to deal with the other racial and national expressions of Medieval culture through the varied versions of what was yet one definite Gothic style. This

is unjust to Spain and Portugal, where a divergent Gothic showed itself early and ended at last in the fantastic and riotous fancies of Burgos and Poblet. It is unjust to western Germany and Austria, where, though late, a Teutonic version of French Gothic produced a few really national masterpieces. It is unjust to Italy, for though the true Gothic, such as the ruined abbeys of Casamari and San Galgano are merely Cistercian importations from Burgundy, the friars' churches of the sculptor Arnolfo not Gothic at all and very ugly at that, and the pictorial facades of Orvieto and Siena merely delightful essays in arbitrary design, there is a real medieval expression in the unique churches of Sicily, with their mingling of Byzantine, Arab, and Norman genius, and in the developed Lombard of North Italy at Pisa, Lucca, Prato, Pistoja. It is doubly unjust to England, for there we find a school of undoubtful Gothic which is quite unlike that of France, yet in spirit the same. The divergence is very complete. As I said before, English Gothic inherits directly from Normandy, not from France, and is therefore always more static, massive, and structurally conservative. Moreover there is a fundamental difference in genius due to the same difference in the people. As opposed to the French with their clear logic, which is sometimes almost cruel, the English are incorrigible sentimentalists, always thinking things are better than they are, and that they can easily make them better still by impulsive and almost unpremeditated action. Apparently we, ourselves, inherit directly from them and are therefore hopelessly addicted to the worship of abstract ideals which do not exist and would not work if they did, while our incorrigible optimism prevents our ever seeing a danger (if it is clearly indicated for the future), or of recognizing its advent until the time for preventive

action is past and nothing is possible but the desperate struggle for life.

11. So in England we find, in her medieval architecture, a curious clinging to established precedents, a shrinking from novelties in structural development, a more or less complete carelessness of logic, a doing of things because they like them that way and not because it is necessarily the reasonable thing to do. And yet, combined with this is always a curious and very appealing struggle toward the symbolical expression of things almost too high for expression. As the Norman abbeys are vaster, more dramatic, and more overpowering than their prototypes, with their massive construction, their cavernous portals, their giant piers, as at Gloucester, almost Egyptian in their proportions, so with Gothic, when it became the universal mode of expression. Vast towers lift themselves at the west and over the crossing; lancet windows prolong themselves upward to improbable heights; new and irrational compositions are tried as in the astonishing west portals of Peterborough, while the plan pulls itself out to inordinate lengths, and doubled transepts and great chapels prolong the awe-inspiring vistas, and add space beyond space to the blue mystery of nave and choir and aisles. It is all very appealing, particularly to us who are of the same blood and temper, but it offers a tempting opportunity to the mechanistic mind that thinks only in terms of logic, law, and clean-cut definitions.

Of course, it is true that we must judge English Gothic by what is left, and this not always of the best. What Henry VIII could not destroy was sacked and wrecked by the Puritan reformers, and what they left the nineteenth century pounced upon as prey for the "restorations" of Wyatt, Lord Grimpthorpe, and Sir Gilbert

Scott. Salisbury remains, with all its defects upon its head, but Guisborough is gone; of the great northern abbeys only fragments exist, and St. Mary's Abbey, at York which must have been the most perfect Gothic in England, after having stood roofless and crumbling for three centuries, yielded in the era of enlightenment, which is to say, the early nineteenth century, to the cupidity of commercialism, and was pulled down and burned into lime.

Some faint idea of the ruthless destruction of the noblest art that was carried on under the direction of the "Defender of the Faith" may be gained from Abbot (now Cardinal) Gasquet's *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, but it is very well to have in mind that the nineteenth century was even more ignorant and rapacious than the sixteenth, though its devastations were carried on with less violence, albeit with equal effectiveness.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CRAFT GUILDS OF THE MIDDLE AGES
Continued

Work of the Guilds as Shown in the Allied Arts[1]

1. What were the allied arts. 2. Origin of the movement. 3. Perfecting the work. 4. Why the allied arts perished. 5. The treasures which have remained. 6. The carillons. 7. Art in glass-work. 8. The marvels of tapestry. 9. Value of tapestry. 10. The loss of the art of tapestry. 11. Three great arts in two thousand years. 12. The tapestry of Flanders. 13. Painting and weaving.

1. Between the Seine and the Rhine lay once a beautiful land wherein more history was made, and recorded in old monuments full of grace and grandeur and fancy, than in almost any other region of the world. The debt of Europe to this region is as great in the case of the so-called "minor arts" as it is elsewhere. Even the language preserves the record: Arras has given its name to the tapestries for which it was famous, linen woven in regular patterns is called diaper, or "linge d'Ypres," cambric is simply the product of Cambria, gauntlet preserves the fame of Ghent for its gloves, while the lost city of Dinant was once so famous for its work in copper, brass, bronze, and gilded metal that during the Middle Ages all products of this kind were called dinanderie. Tapestry weaving is, or was, an art essentially Flemish; illumination, if shared with Italy and in a measure every

[1] From the *Heart of Europe*, by Ralph Adams Cram. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y. Reprinted with the permission of the author and publishers.

land where there were monks and monasteries, reached peculiarly notable heights in Flanders, Brabant, and Champagne; the casting of bells and the forming of them into carillons is peculiarly the province of this region, while metal work, whether of gold and silver, or of bronze and copper and brass, was an art of distinction even from the time of Charlemagne.

2. It was he that was primarily responsible for the beginnings of many of these admirable arts. From his capital at Aix, where he had gathered all the art and learning he could glean from western Europe, went out the influences that persisted long beyond his day and that of his ill-fortuned dynasty. The Scandinavian tribes and the Celts of Gaul had always been craftsmen in metals, particularly bronze, and Charlemagne used them under the direction of his Roman and Byzantine artificers, developing an art that was neither one nor the other, but a new Christian mode of expression. When toward the close of the tenth century the young Princess Theophano came from the Bosphorus as the bride of Otho II, she brought with her other artists, with a treasure of Byzantine craftsmenship in weaving, metals, enamels, and ivory carving; and a new impulse was given, so that, under the direction of a crescent Christianity, a local and racial art developed along many lines and extended itself through the whole region and into France, Normandy, England, and Germany as well. From Aix, Archbishop Willigis and Bishop Bernward carried into Germany the art of metal working as they had learned it, one to Mainz, the other to Hildesheim, where their works still remain. To Dinant, Huy, and Liège the same impulse was given that later extended through Brabant and Flanders. In France the beginnings seem to have been at the hands of St. Eloi at Limoges and Abbot

Suger at St. Denis, but it was all within the area to which our attention is confined.

3. From the time of Charlemagne the production of works of art in precious and common metals was an ever-increasing industry, lapsing during the second Dark Ages, beginning with new and unexampled vigour with the great religious revival of the first years of the eleventh century. It is impossible to form an adequate estimate either of the magnitude of the product or the degree of concrete beauty that came in these many lines of art out of the Middle Ages. For five hundred years craftsmen were busy over all what is now Rhenish, Prussia, Holland, Belgium, France, and England, with the Scandinavian countries, Italy, and Spain in only a less degree, in producing an infinite number of exquisite things for an infinite number of churches; metal work of every kind and for every conceivable purpose — sacred vessels, crosses, crosiers, reliquaries, shrines, tombs, and screens; woven tapestries, to hang on walls of chateaux and cathedrals; embroidered and jewelled vestments for an unending series of bishops, priests, altars; illuminated volumes whose every vellum page was a work of art and whose bindings were studded with jewels; carved wood and ivory in endless designs and for endless purposes; stained glass, enamels, tiles. Every church, abbey, and cathedral was by the beginning of the Hundred Year's War as full of works of consummate art as the private museum of a modern millionaire, and were you to gather together the treasures of ecclesiastical crafts in the Cluny, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Metropolitan in New York you might have about as much as at that time might have been found in a provincial cathedral of the second class or a minor monastery. In France the sculpture has been largely, and the glass partially, saved;

in Flanders many of the pictures; in England a good proportion of the churches themselves, but the rest is gone, utterly and irrevocably, and we can hardly more than dimly imagine from a Gloucester candlestick, an Ascoli cope, a Shrine of St. Sebald the nature of what has been taken from us.

4. Even from the first these things had three qualities that argued against their preservation, the world being what it is. They were intrinsically valuable because of their bronze and silver and gold and precious gems; therefore in the wars that followed the cresting of medievalism they were stolen wholesale by one army after another and their jewels plucked out, and then they were broken up, melted down, and turned to their original estate of lumps of bullion, or dead metal, all of which had its price. They were the most sacred material things possessed by the Church that had created them; part and parcel of the Catholic sacraments, memorials of the honored dead, caskets for the reverent treasuring of the relics of the saints; therefore they were the particular object of the blind and furious hatred of Protestants, whether Huguenots, Calvinists, Presbyterians, or, in a less degree, Lutherans. They were Gothic in their inimitable art, hence anathema to the bewigged bishops, the worldly priests, and, most dangerous of all, the conceited canons of the eighteenth century. What the thief overlooked the fanatic destroyed, and what he forgot the ignorant and vulgar amateur purged away to make place for imitation marble and secular frippery. After four centuries of this it is a wonder that anything remains, and, to tell the truth, there is little enough.

5. Nevertheless, it is surprising how much of this was still in our chosen territory in 1914, and how much that is in museums elsewhere came originally from the same

place. Liège had its extraordinary bronze font, Hal a font, a lectern, and many other treasures of late Gothic and early Renaissance art; Louvain, Tirlemont, Xanten, Aix, and Treves each had a few pieces of metal work of immense artistic value, while in Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp, in Laon, Noyon, Sens, and Reims were a few miraculously preserved shrines, tapestries, vestments, and sacred vessels. As for the treasures of the European and American museums, the greater part came from Flanders, Brabant, the Rhineland, or eastern France, for this was the great center of industry, the fountainhead of artistic inspiration. Of the "dinanderie," that owed its existence to the influence of the four great leaders, St. Eloi, St. Willigis, Abbot Suger, and Bishop Bernward, absolutely nothing remains except the fine group of bronze masterpieces by the last at Hildesheim. Liège had, however, the extremely important bronze font made by Regnier of Huy about 1112, and Lille possessed a censer of his workmanship, while in Maastricht was a great shrine of gilded and enamelled copper set with precious stones; the Convent of Notre Dame at Namur and the church of Walcourt had no less than eighteen specimens of the handicraft of Brother Hugh of the great but long ago destroyed Abbey at Oignies between the Meuse and the Sambre, representing the art of a century later, while later still we had the "Chasse de Notre Dame" and the reliquary of St. Eleutherus at Tournai, and the shrine of St. Gertrude of Nivelles made in 1272. Of the vast product of the fourteenth century there are a few fragments only, an eagle lectern and a great paschal candlestick at Tongres, some crosses, reliquaries, monstrances, and candlesticks at Aix, Tongres, Furnes, Mainz, Xanten, Burges, and Ghent, but, fortunately it would now seem, the greater part of what remains is preserved

in the museums of Paris and London and therefore safe for another period. Outside the museums the great treasures were to be found at Sens and Laon, the latter being particularly rich, as is proved by the fact that the cathedral is said to contain no less than eighty reliquaries covering the whole period of the Middle Ages. So far as monumental tombs are concerned, every church in France has been swept clear, chiefly by the Revolutionists, not one of the marvellous collections at St. Denis and Reims remaining, but in Bruges we still have the fine tomb of Mary of Burgundy, of black marble encased in a foliated tracery of gilded copper and colored enamels.

6. In the bourdons of France and the carillons of the Low Countries the art of the metalworker combines with that of music. Both the carillon and the English peal are late developments, the first of the sixteenth, the second of the seventeenth century, but from the beginning of the thirteenth century great bells, used singly or in small combinations, were in constant use. Most of the latter are gone, melted down in the Hundred Years' War and the Revolution in France, and the wars of religion in the Rhineland and the Low Countries, though a few remain at Amiens, Sens, Metz, and Beauvais, with one weighing over a ton which hung at Reims until last year. The carillons of Belgium and Holland were intact until that time, though many have now fallen with the splendid towers that held them. Arras is gone and probably Dunkerque; Louvain and Ypres are gone and possibly Mons; Malines, most beautiful of all, has been battered to pieces and its forty-five bells have been cracked, melted, hurled in ruin down through the many stories of the great tower. Time after time during the last generation from twenty thousand to forty thousand people have assembled to hear these bells rung by M. Denyn,

the greatest master of the art, but they will hear them no more until, perhaps, when the world is made new the bells of Malines may ring out again to welcome the dawn of a better day.

Whether the English peal of an octave, with the bells attuned to the intervals of the diatonic scale, and swung by hand, a man to each rope, in accordance with the most intricate mathematical formulas and without recognized melodies, is better or worse art than the carillon of thirty-five to fifty two bells, covering sometimes four octaves and a half, in accord with the chromatic scale, fixed in their head-stocks and struck by hammers manipulated by one man sitting before a keyboard, and reproducing the most elaborate musical compositions, is no part of the argument. Each has its place, each is a mode of musical art, and just because one may like the strange and subtle variations of an English peal thundering out its vibrant tones from great bells swinging and clashing in a grey old tower, it does not follow that he must reject the floating and ethereal harmonies of the Belgian carillon pouring into the still evening air strange melodies that are eternally haunting in their poignant appeal. They are silent now (1917), even those that still hang in their tall towers, and the roar of giant artillery, splitting and harshly reverberating, has taken their place. . . .

7. Some day the world will awaken to the fact that there are other great arts besides architecture, painting, and sculpture; already there is a suspicion abroad that music, poetry, and the drama are arts also and not merely vehicles for the expression of temperament, and there is even a preliminary waking of the subconsciousness which threatens to confess that ritual and ceremonial have been, and may be again, a great fine art in the same sense. Little by little the pharisaic phrase, "industrial art," is

yielding some of its component parts and offering them to the very superior haute noblesse of fine art, and amongst these are stained glass and tapestry. The recent discovery of the existence of Chartres Cathedral and its glass has settled one point, and much against their will the artist and the amateur and the commentator have to admit that the art of these windows, and of those at Bourges and Le Mans and Angers, is of the highest, and quite in the class of the painters of Italy and Flanders, the sculptors of France and England (in the Middle Ages), and the master builders from Laon to Amiens.

Of this particularly glorious art, which has become more completely a lost art than any other ever revealed to man, there is little in the region under consideration. It did not issue from the heart of Europe, but had its beginnings elsewhere and its culmination as well. It was an art of the twelfth and thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, degenerating rapidly after the year 1300, and, while the churches and abbeys and cathedrals between the Seine and the Somme were once splendid with glass that almost rivaled that of Chartres, the Reformation and the Revolution had seen to it that the major part of this glory had been made to depart. Amiens retains a little in its chevet chapels, and Reims only a year ago was blazing with an apocalyptic splendor that is now transformed into gaping and fire-swept openings, laced by distorted metal bars, and heaps of pulverized refuse ground into the blood and ashes on shattered pavements. Whatever the Low Countries may have had is long since gone the way of all the other beautiful things the Calvinists did not like and only fragments, imitations, and Renaissance absurdities remain.

8. With the other great art, that of tapestry, the case

is fortunately different. This was almost the intimate art of the Heart of Europe, finding its beginnings in Aix when the Greek princess brought with her from the East the first examples of Byzantine needlework and weaving that had been seen in the West in her day, and going on to new glories in Arras, Brussels, Tournai, Audenaarde, Lille, Enghein. The perfection of tapestry weaving came in the last half of the fifteenth century, but the advance was regular for a century before, and if we can judge from the few examples left, the work of the fourteenth century had many fine and powerful qualities that were all its own. The collapse came suddenly, early in the sixteenth century, being marked by Raphael's intrusion into a field where he had no place, and after this there was no more hope for tapestry than for the other arts, and it rapidly sank to the point where the products of the Gobelins, Beauvais, and Aubussons looms were much admired.

If Gothic tapestry had possessed a pecuniary value easily translated into cash, or if it had been closely associated with the most sacred religious things, we should have preserved less than is actually the case. As it is, it was seldom the victim of cupidity, or fanaticism, but by its very nature it was perishable, and therefore nearly all the work antedating the fifteenth century has vanished. Its great enemy, however, was the ignorant and vulgar culture of the nineteenth century, and during the first fifty years of this destructive epoch it melted rapidly away. Just before the outbreak of the French Revolution it is no exaggeration to say that there were in France alone enough tapestries to carpet a road from Paris to Arras; of course, many were of the Gobelins type and comparatively valueless as art, but every chateau, every cathedral and monastery, almost every church had its sets of " arras," and these were of the fifteenth

and sixteenth centuries; the curious products of the Renaissance were confined to kings, princes, great nobles, and their respective palaces. With 1793 the massacre began; everything feudal, even by implication, was burned, sometimes just out of pure deviltry, as when tapestries were consumed in heaps at the foot of the "Tree of Liberty"; sometimes through thrift, as when in 1797 the Directory burned at one time nearly two hundred ancient works of art to recover the gold and silver bullion — which they did at this one holocaust to the value of $13,000. Mr. G. L. Hunter has reckoned the value of these destroyed tapestries at about $2,500,000 in the market of today. At this rate, the current value of all the tapestries in France at the Revolution would have been about $250,000,000.

9. No appreciation of this value developed until nearly the end of the nineteenth century. In 1852 a set of ten, formerly belonging to Louis Phillippe, with a total length of one hundred and twenty feet, sold for about $1,200, and at the same sale another set of six, running to eighty feet, was bought for $400. At present the intrinsic value of these wonderful creations is quite fully appreciated, and any one who can secure a fifteenth-century work for less than $300 a square yard is fortunate. And yet during the whole of the eighteenth century tapestries were ruthlessly cut up to form floor rugs, used for packing bales of merchandise, or, as at Angers, slashed into strips to protect the roots of orange-trees from the cold, or nailed on the stalls of the bishop's stable so that the episcopal nags might not scar their precious flanks. This last outrage, by the way, was perpetrated on the unique series of the Apocalypse, a sequence of panels eighteen feet high with a total length of four hundred and seventy-two feet, woven in Paris about 1370 from designs by

Thirteenth Century Tapestry

Fifteenth Century Tapestry

Photographs by courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art

THE BURGUNDIAN SACRAMENTS

Photographs by courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art

Jean de Bruges, court painter to the Emperor Charles V. for the use of the Duke of Anjou in his private chapel, and at a cost (in the money of today) of upward of $60,000. They had been given to the cathedral by King René in 1480, but by the beginning of the nineteenth century they were quite out of fashion and therefore useless; so until a rag merchant sufficiently accommodating could be found they were used as noted above and finally sold (the opportunity at last offering) in 1843 for $60, the purchaser ultimately returning them to the cathedral when some glimmerings of intelligence came back to the ecclesiastical authorities.

10. When this sort of thing was the rule in France and England and Germany for more than a century during which civilization and culture were progressing with such notable rapidity, it is a miracle that anything has come down to us, particularly when you remember what the Calvinists and Sansculottes and Reformers did to monasteries and chateaux and entire cities in the two preceding centuries; but a good deal did so come down, including even the poor remains of the very much domesticated tapestries of Angers. There is only one other fourteenth-century set woven at Arras that can be positively identified, and that is the series now (or recently) in the cathedral of Tournai, though we know from wills and inventories that at the beginning of the fifteenth century they existed in hundreds. The remains of this early work are fine and strong in design, powerful in decoration, clear but faded in color. With the fifteenth century there came an amazing advance, similar to the sudden appearance of the Van Eycks in painting at exactly the same moment. The "Burgundian Sacraments" — or what remains — now in the Metropolitan Museum as the gift of the late J. P. Morgan, is one of the finest

examples in existence of this earliest of the great periods. Admirable as it is, it fails in perfection of beauty before the wonderful works of art that immediately followed. With the beginning of the fifteenth century tapestry weaving came suddenly to a level of supreme excellence that places it for a hundred years on a level with the other arts, however august they may be. Very few of these masterpieces remain in Belgium; you must search for them in Paris, in London, in Madrid, in New York, in the museums of all the world, but the search is rewarded by the discovery of an art that, however brief its day, was one of the great arts of the world.

Each art has its own medium of expression and to this medium it absolutely adheres in its periods of greatness, adapting itself to its limitations, working within them, and even making them tributary to its excellence. Limitations are, after all, the greatest gift of God to man instead of being, as the last century feigned, something that deplorably existed only to be transcended; without them man would revert to the condition of the jelly-fish or the primal ooze of the depths of the sea; with them he has an opportunity to demonstrate his divine elements through a development that is both in spite of and because of the firm lines they draw that cannot be overpassed. One of the great things in art is its revelation of the possibility of spiritual achievement by and through the narrowest physical limitations. When, on the other hand, architecture tries to assimilate the peculiar methods of bridge building; when painting intrudes into the province of sculpure, literature, photography, or even music; when music becomes mathematical or takes to itself the habits of the circus performer; when sculpture deliquesces into a sloppy kind of black-and-white illustration; when stained glass and tapestry become pic-

torial; when, in fact, all the arts forsake their own provinces and deny their limitations, as they have tended to do during the last century, splashing over, the one into the other, they cease to be arts at all and become unprofitable aberrations.

11. Only three great arts have come into existence during the last two thousand years — music, stained glass, and tapestry — and each developed its own exact and individual mode of expression. Music was as old as architecture, painting, sculpture, poetry, and the drama, but under the influences of Christianity it gradually transformed itself into what was almost a new art and one that has remained the only vital art through all the unfriendly influences of modern civilization. Stained glass was an absolutely new art, taking its rise in the twelfth century, culminating in the thirteenth, decaying through the two following centuries, and entirely disappearing in the eighteenth century. It is an art of Christianity, of Frank genius, and of the Ile de France. Tapestry is also a new art, beginning about 1350, culminating a century later, dying almost in a day (as a great art), about 1520. It also is Christian, but, unlike glass, it is primarily secular, and it is explicitly and almost exclusively Flemish, the great contribution of a distinguished race to the imperishable art of the world.

12. It was the glorification of a national industry — weaving —and is significant as showing how, under wholesome impulses and in a stimulating environment a simple industry may be transfigured and made into art. Its medium was peculiarly delicate, subtle, and beautiful, threads of spun wool, silk and gold and silver woven by hand into a fixed warp of strung threads. These filaments of silk (as in the finest work) had peculiar qualities of beauty, combining both lustrousness and

depth, while the colors being entirely vegetable dyes, with none of the harsh horrors of the analine by-products of coal-tar, were infinitely varied and of unique richness and soft splendor. Fortunately, this new artistic mode was developed sufficiently prior to the breakdown of art which was signalized by the career of a man in himself a very great artist, Raphael, to permit a full century of life, and at the hands of a people who had a peculiar appreciation of decoration and of decorative methods. The result was startling, for a new art was born and one of the most distinguished quality. As color decoration the tapestries of Flanders come near being the very finest things in the world, although we must judge them from a few examples only, the admittedly greatest having long since fallen victims to greed, fanaticism, and the stolid ignorance of the eighteenth century. Fortunately for the general public, the remaining masterpieces are now widely scattered and may be studied with comparative ease, the Metropolitan Museum in New York being particularly rich and having, either in its own name or by loan, the Burgundian Sacraments, the matchless "Mazarin" Christ of Glory, the almost equally beautiful "Coronation of the Virgin," as well as scores of others, many of them of supreme excellence.

13. It is as impossible to describe a tapestry in words as it is to do the same by a Chartres window. In point of composition the tapestries of the fifteenth century are matched only by the greatest pictures; even when they are crowded with figures there is the most masterly spacing of masses, the most consummate balance of form. When one realizes that in every case the design is the work of the members of the guild and not of the more famous painters of the time, the wonder grows over the apparently universal feeling of the highest type of artis-

tic expression. Compared with the best of the Flemish tapestries, the boasted and "much admired" composition of Raphael in the "Disputa" and the "School of Athens," of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel, is mathematical and academic. In line and line composition there is the same exquisite sensitiveness that is almost Greek or Japanese in its subtlety and rhythm, while the color, though in many cases faded, is as pure and musical in its several tones as it is resonant and splendid in combination. And through all this consummate mastery and this supreme artistic sense run a peculiar charm and distinction that are found only in such unique products as the pictures of Jan van Eyck, Fra Angelico, the Lorenzetti, Carpaccio, and their kind. Through them you enter into a dim and golden fairyland full of wistful music and haunting memories, where fair ladies, courteous knights, delicate-winged angels, aureoled saints in blazing dalmatics pass like dreams through far countries, "where it is always afternoon" and where the land is always lovely, the skies serene, the flowers and birds and little beasts friendly and well beloved. Chretien de Love, King Arthur and Roland and King René, Guenivere, and the gracious queens and gentle ladies of all the Middle Ages live again, or rather prolong their lives through a passive immortality into which whoever understands is welcome to enter and sit him down in peace.

CHAPTER IX

THE CRAFT GUILDS OF THE MIDDLE AGES
Continued

Social Life in Germany as Reflected in Art[1]

1. Market scenes. 2. Dress and amusements. 3. Headgear. 4. Fashions in hair. 5. Use of gaudy colors. 6. Art as a portrayal of abuses. 7. Pictures of domestic life. 8. Art in the simplest household goods. 9. Masterworks in metal. 10. Art treasures in the churches. 11. Masters in Nuremberg. 12. Work in brass, wood, and stone. 13. Pictorial art in glass. 14. Miniature painting. 15. Skill in embroidery.

1. Thanks to the number of pictures, done by the best artists of the time, we are familiar with the manners of the day, and can contrast them with those of later times. A miniature or a painting on glass brings before us a market scene in which women and young girls are recommending their wares and offering them for sale — white bread and butter on a white plate, eggs in baskets, and milk in jugs. Pigeons and young chickens are tied in hampers, which are carried on the heads of the women, who wear dresses made of coarse stuff, the bodices high in the neck and crossed over the bosom, the skirts scant and of convenient length. An apron is tied by strings knotted in front. The hair, divided in the middle, is allowed to hang loose by the young girls, while by the older women it is hidden under a handkerchief, which hangs loosely down or is tied under the chin.

[1] From Janssen's *History of the German People*, vol. II, p. 187-241. Reprinted with permission of the publishers.

2. We also find the popular amusements of the day represented with the same precision and accuracy. For instance, one picture shows us children spinning tops, trundling hoops, playing blindman's buff, swinging and turning somersaults. Another shows us older people amusing themselves with chess, backgammon, and dice. May festivals and shooting parties are often represented. Dancing being the favorite, indeed the general, amusement of the people in the Middle Ages, it naturally formed a constant subject for art. The lower orders always preferred to dance in the open air. The inns never contained dancing-halls, and we see the gay crowds collected on the green, dancing to the music of the tambourine, the bagpipe, or the violin. The wealthier classes had their private dancing saloons, and sometimes used the city halls for this, their favorite amusement. A copper engraving by Israel von Meckenen gives us a good idea of those dancing festivals which were so popular on the Rhine at the close of the fifteenth century. In the center the musicians are placed on a gallery supported by pillars. The dancing couples seem to be moving with great difficulty, on account of the tight-fitting jackets and pointed shoes of the men, and the cumbersome trains of the ladies; these trains completely cover the floor. Endless variety is displayed in the costumes. The headdresses are shaped like sugarloaves, high on the coifs, ornamented with flowers or ribbons. The men wear loose jackets over their tight-fitting vests, fastened with buckles, and long cloaks reaching to the floor, or else short mantles. The women all wear low-necked dresses; the men's faces are shaved, but their hair hangs in curls round the head. For headgear they wear a gaily embroidered banc, a hat with feathers, or a turbanlike cap.

From the stained glass, the miniature painting, and

even the altar pictures of the period, we can form an exact idea of the prevailing taste for rich materials and bright colors, for art in the Middle Ages copied exactly from Nature. We see the dresses for state occasions made of thick brocade of the richest colors, and embroidered with gold and silver; the long sleeves slit open and trimmed with embroidery. Dresses enriched with precious stones and pearls often had six or seven rows of coral chains around the neck. Finger-rings were worn profusely. A study of the inventories still extant of the wardrobes of well-to-do citizens will give us some idea of the luxury and variety of the dress of the Middle Ages. In the will of the wife of George Winter, of Nuremberg, dated 1485, there is mention, among other things, of four mantles of Malines silk, six long overskirts, three smock frocks, three underdresses, six white aprons, one black, two white bath cloaks. Along with other jewels we find thirty rings mentioned. A citizen of Breslau contributed to his daughter's trousseau (1490) a fur-lined mantle and dress, four dresses of different values, several caps, sashes, and armlets, a bodice embroidered with pearls, and a betrothal ring worth twenty-five florins. We read of another citizen's daughter receiving in 1470 from her guardians, as an inheritance from her mother, thirty-six gold rings, besides several chains, buckles, and cinctures.

3. The pictures of headgear, both of men and women, are very diverse and extraordinary. Women wore pointed lace caps a yard high, or headdresses formed of colored stuff pressed and ornamented with gold and precious stones. The headdress of the unmarried women of the bourgeois class in the city was particularly remarkable consisting of a muslin handkerchief laid in folds on a wire frame, and having ribbon strings to tie under the chin. The shapes of men's hats and caps were quite as remark-

able. On some of the illuminated parchments of the city regulations of Hamburg we find patterns of hats and caps, some high and some low; some with wide, and others with narrow brims, turned up behind or *vice versa*. There are beaver, felt, or cloth hats of various colors and designs, trimmed with feathers, gold ornamentation, or ribbons that hung down to the ground.

4. Long curls were considered a great adjunct to manly beauty, and much time and care were bestowed on the arrangement of them. When the son of the patrician, Jerome Tschekenburlin of Basle, became disgusted with the vanities of the world and joined the Carthusian order at the age of twenty-six, he had his portrait painted in the court dress in which he entered the monastery. Long curls encircled his forehead and fell over his shoulders. In the portraits of the youthful King Maximilian we always notice his beautiful wavy hair falling low over his neck. Even Albert Dürer, the son of the plain goldsmith, seemed to delight in his ringlets. Sometimes, even, we see men with their curls encircled by an enameled band, fastened by buckle and heron's plume, or even with a bunch of ivy or flowers.

Instead of flowing curls the women wore thick braids of hair behind their ears, which gave rise to the reproach that "the women wear the hair of the dead." The young girls wore their plaits in gold or jeweled nets, to which were attached golden aiglets. Dürer's well-known picture of the Espousal of the Virgin gives a good idea of the favorite dress of the young fiancées of the Middle Ages. Over a short velvet dress, which Mary holds in one hand, she wears a richly fur-trimmed robe with train and hanging sleeves. On her head is a small cap and veil. Among her companions is a Nuremberg woman of

good position, who wears a full mantle and a piled-up linen cap.

5. Still more striking, though, than the shapes of clothes, even among the working classes, was the variety of their colors. Stonecutters and carpenters worked in costumes consisting of a red coat with blue trousers and caps, or in yellow coats with red trousers and caps; others, again, are represented in light blue and green mixed with yellow and red. The merchants behind their counters also wore the same bright colors. A peasant, bringing his pig to market, wears a red hat, green coat, and brown trousers. A truckman, wheeling a hogshead before him, appears in a red coat lined with green, red cap, blue hose, and bronze riding boots. The village dandies seemed to delight in producing ridiculous effects by the multitude of colors they wore at the same time. One side of their costume would be of one color, while the other was composed of all the shades of the rainbow, divided into different figures; others would appear in red from head to foot. Embroidery was also much used. In the year 1464 Bernhard Rohrbach, from Frankfort, had the sleeves of his coat so richly embroidered that they had eleven ounces of silver on them.

6. Art in those days was a faithful portrayal of life in all its varieties and absurdities, its virtues and its vices, the caprices and the tyranny of its fashions, its wealth and its luxury, its misery and its squalor. Each class and condition of mankind is in turn presented to our vision. Take, for instance, the hideous rabble in Martin Schöngauer's Carrying of the Cross, who are driving the Saviour to His death. They are clad in the clothes which chance or charity has given them. One has an overcoat without sleeves, and his legs are naked; another has trousers, but his feet are bare, and his short, torn

jacket reveals a tattered shirt. Another, with naked shoulders, wears a cap with tassels, from under which a long curl escapes and hangs down on his neck. A fourth has bound his head in a kind of cotton turban, and a fifth wears a shapeless felt covering on his close-cut hair, while his neighbor lets his unkempt locks float in the wind. Among the rabble we discover figures that look as if they had seen better days; one is dressed in a garment trimmed with fringe and ribbon loops, and his arms are bared to the elbow; another, with laced shoes and naked legs, has wrapped a sheepskin round his shoulders as though it were a royal ermine. An old man is clothed in a hermit's frock. The effect which is produced by all these figures, and which one sees so often reproduced in the pictures of the time, is painfully repulsive, and gives a vivid idea of the masses who played so prominent a part in the politico-ecclesiastical strifes of the sixteenth century.

7. Among all this foppery and folly, however, the workmen, the burghers, the professional and the scientific men, stand out in more sober relief. Both in form and coloring the dress of the artisans was very simple. It generally consisted of a short, convenient, blouselike garment, and tight or wide trousers, either coming down over or tucked into the boots or shoes. When at work they slipped on sleeveless jackets and tucked their shirt sleeves up to their shoulders. On their closely cropped heads they wore either caps or felt hats. The dress of the burghers was a short vest with an outer garment over it, either in the shape of a blouse closed in front and put on over the head, or else a coat open down the front. This outer garment was generally brown or black, and lined or bordered with fur. Scientific and professional men wore long, full robes, reaching to the feet,

almost always of a dark color, but occasionally red. A simple biretta-like cap covered their close-cut hair. These distinct costumes for each rank and position are very characteristic of "the true, honest German citizen" and German domestic life, and are truthfully depicted by German art. How homelike and comfortable, for instance, is the room in which Dürer depicts St. Jerome! It has two windows with small, round panes; the ceiling is of dark timber; in the corner is an antique oak table, on which are the crucifix and an inkstand, and the furniture is ample and comfortable. In the background we see the large hourglass which is considered an indispensable accessory in all well-regulated households, the row of tapers ready lighted, the flasks of balsam, and the medicine case stocked with household remedies. There lies also the leather portfolio, with writing materials and a large scissors. Beside the rosary lies a brush; from the ceiling hangs a gourd; under the bench are thick-soled sabots. Everything bespeaks German thrift and domestic comfort.

Anything that may be wanting to make this a complete picture of a German home is added by Dürer in the bedroom of St. Anne after the birth of the Virgin. A wide staircase with heavy balustrades leads from the end of the room to an upper story; near the door, whose massive locks attract attention, is a washstand with all its conveniences, the towels and brushes hanging near. On a shelf are seen a richly bound prayerbook, a handsome candlestick, spice and medicine boxes. In front of the window is drawn up one of those comfortable seats which are yet to be seen in old German houses. There are no chairs in the room, but instead, several cushioned seats. The table is massive, and the carved chest, the repository of the choice household linen, stands in the corner. St.

Anne lies in a canopied bed, and is in the act of taking some soup or other refreshing beverage. Everything around her bespeaks the perfection of housekeeping. The sponsors and neighbors gathered together are also refreshing themselves with food and drink, and one stout housewife in full armor of sidepocket, bunch of keys, and chatelaine, seems particularly anxious for a drink. A maid servant is in the act of bringing in a cradle and a bath for the infant Mary.

One of the most beautiful pictures of German domestic life is Dürer's Holy Family at their Daily Duties. Mary sits outside the door with spindle in her hand, while the Infant Jesus lies in His cradle, and Joseph is making a wooden trough. Little angels, in the shape of boys, are collecting the chips in a basket and at the same time indulging in childish pranks; one of them brings a bunch of lilies of the valley to the young mother. It is a faithful representation of German life, where "everything is open and well regulated; where all is peace, and freedom, and joy."

8. The domestic hearth was the central point in the lives of our forefathers, and we cannot cease to admire their skill in making home comfortable and attractive. Nothing that was in daily use was too trivial or ignoble to be beautified. The hand of the artist was observable in the balustrades, the ceilings, the doors and windows, the stoves and the candelabra. Even the common kitchen furniture of a burgher's house, of which some samples are still extant, betrays the same care. Thus it was with excusable pride that Wimpheling said that Germany deserved universal admiration not only on account of its sublime creations in painting, sculpture, and architecture, but also in the originality displayed in the making of common things. This may be explained by the sym-

pathy which existed between the artists and the mechanics.

Art had grown out of manual work as a flower grows from its stem, and, retaining its close connection with its original source, it continued to exercise the most important influence on all the productions of artisans or mechanics. The earliest artists, indeed, called themselves simply mechanics. For instance, in the early documents, Syrlin of Ulm is described as "joiner," Adam Krafft as "stonecutter," and Peter Vischer as "coppersmith." The architect of a cathedral was not above designing a simple villa. The carver of the choir stalls also made house furniture. The most renowned painters used their talents for decorating houses, painting windows, or illuminating coats of arms.

Artists and mechanics worked in conjunction and perfected each other. The mechanics aimed at artistic merit in their work, but had no wish to overstep its limits, finding in their workshops sufficient employment, remuneration, renown, and pleasure. The simplest work was a labor of love, and hence the lasting impression which it was able to produce. Art and art handiwork found ready welcome and encouragement among the well-to-do classes, who were proud of possessing treasures of art grown on native soil, "beautiful things of home production."

9. Sculpture comes next in order to architecture. Its business is to furnish and decorate the spaces produced by the architect. In their best period we find the two arts closely bound up together, and the masterpieces of sculpture bear the clear stamp of their relation to their mother art. The greater number of the masterworks of the fifteenth century have been destroyed, but we have yet remaining many good specimens in stone, metal,

and wood — such as statues on domes, churches, chapels, and private houses; porches; altars covered with figures in low and high relief; bronze altars, tabernacles, organ frames, baptismal fonts; monuments for tombs in stone and brass; chancel and choir stalls; church vessels of all sizes and in different metals; monstrances, ciboriums, reliquaries, altar crosses, croziers, candelabra, and other metal work; drinking cups, scabbards, and the like.

The business of the goldsmiths and silversmiths was particularly brisk and diversified, and many of them produced results which quite equalled, if they did not surpass, the best Greek and Oriental work. This branch of art reached its highest perfection at Nuremberg, Cologne, Augsburg, Ratisbon, Landshut, and Mayence. In the year 1475 there were more than thirty goldsmiths in Mayence, and many whose names have come down to posterity were citizens of Augsburg, Ratisbon, and Landshut. The famous goldsmith, George Seld, was employed for twenty-six years in Augsburg at the construction of a silver altar for the cathedral. It was a representation of the scenes of the Last Supper, the Passion, and the Resurrection, and it weighed almost two hundred pounds.

The goldsmith's trade in Nuremberg often numbered more than fifty "masters," who had large workshops and sent specimens of their handicraft all over Europe. They did not confine their business to mere ornamental works, costly vases and so forth, but excelled in modeling figures and casting them in different metals. The ornaments of that period were all of great artistic value. They represented all kinds of figures, single and in groups, religious and secular, and done in metal and enamel — enameled peacocks, for instance, with dazzling tails; the figures of ladies with light-colored dresses and gold crowns studded

with pearls and precious stones. In 1509 the council of Nuremberg ordered gold, silver, and enameled flowers of great beauty to be made for Ladislaus, king of Hungary. In 1512 it presented Lawrence, the bishop of Wurtzburg, with a silver reliquary on which the emblems of the months of the year were most artistically carved.

10. In order to form some idea of the wealth of gold and silver work in Germany in the fifteenth century we have only to read the treasure lists of some of the churches, such as the Church of our Lady in Nuremberg in 1466, and the Cathedral of Freising in 1482. In the inventory of the Cathedral of Passau we read of silver reliquaries in the shape of churches and towers, of twenty silver branches, of forty silver statues, shrines, and monstrances. In the Cathedral of Bern, among other treasures, were a silver statue of the Christ weighing thirty-one pounds, two silver-gilt angels of eighty pounds weight, silver busts of St. Vincent and St. Achatius, a massive casket for relics of the patron saint, weighing twenty-eight pounds and set with precious stones valued at two thousand ducats, and the statues of the Twelve Apostles, each weighing twenty-four pounds. We find, furthermore, that in the 1462 the Abbot Conrad, of Tegernsee, bought two silver reliquaries and four monstrances, one of which, ornamented with a representation of the Mother of God, cost five hundred and twenty-five florins. A figure of the Blessed Virgin surrounded by an aureole cost more than five hundred florins. There were silver statues of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, a pectoral cross of pure gold and precious stones, a large miter, a chain and cross, many reliquaries, and eighteen chalices. Articles of this sort were also in the possession of private individuals.

There is still to be seen in the Cathedral at Kuhr a silver-gilt monstrance, three feet high, made in 1490, the figures and ornamentation of which are marvels of art. It is surpassed in cost but not in beauty by the ostensorium of Master Lucas, citizen and councilor of Donauworth in 1513, which represented in wonderful enamel work coats of arms, forty figures and inscriptions, and was presented to the monastery by Maximilian.

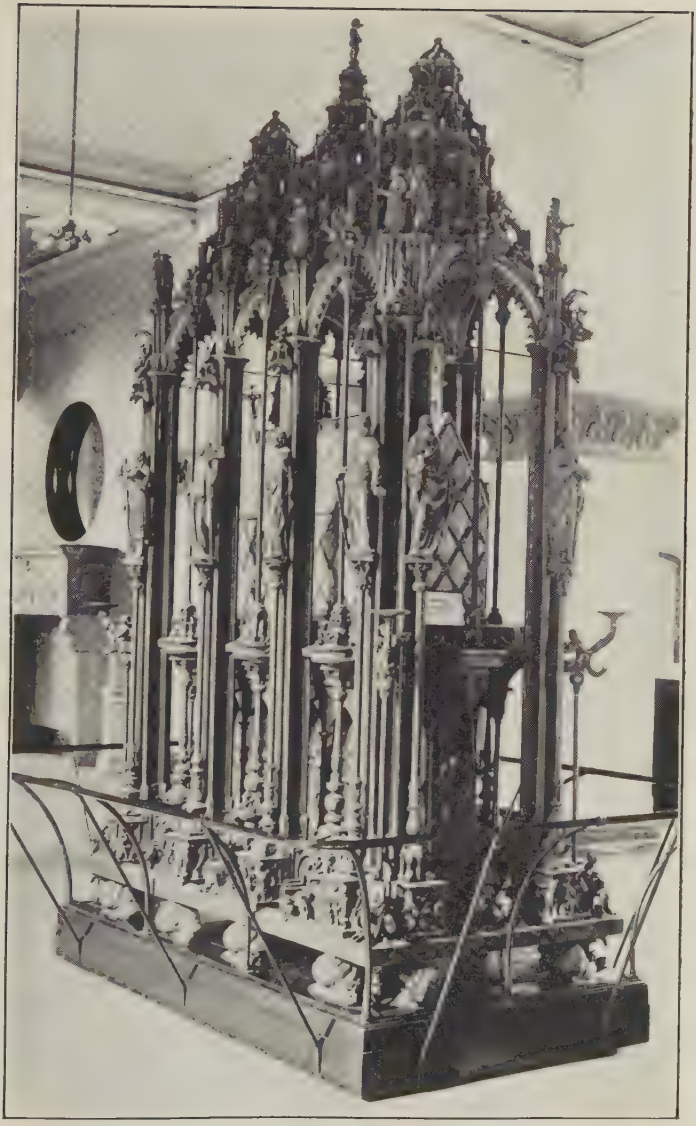
11. Nuremberg attained quite as high a reputation for its bronzes as for its silver and gold work. As early as the year 1447 the poet Hans Rosenplut wrote thus of the workers in bronze: "In Nuremberg I find many workers in brass who have no equals. Everything that flies or runs, swims or poises, man, angel, bird or brute, fish or worm, every creature of ornamental form, everything that is on earth, they can fashion out of bronze. Nothing comes amiss to their art. Their skill and works are seen in many lands."

The most renowned of the Nuremberg metalworkers was Peter Vischer, a simple coppersmith, who brought the art of casting to the highest perfection. Neudorfer writes of him: "This Peter Vischer was affable towards all and expert in natural sciences, and was so renowned for his skill in casting that any prince or potentate visiting the city rarely omitted going to his workshop." Unassuming, modest, and greedy after learning, even in his old age, he was to be seen every day working in his foundry. Through a long life he maintained the closest intimacy with the stonecutter Adam Krafft and the coppersmith Sebastian Lindenast. The three, according to Neudorfer, "grew up together and were like brothers. On feast days they went on excursions together as though they were still young apprentices; often, too, going without food or drink." In his masterpiece, the shrine

of St. Sebald, in the church of that name in Nuremberg, Vischer represented himself at the base with a full beard, clad in the garb of a metalcaster, with apron, cap, and hammer.

On this work Vischer was employed from the year 1508-1519, assisted by his five sons. At the base was engraved the sentence: "Erected to the Glory of God Almighty and the honour of the prince of heaven, St. Sebald, by the alms of pious souls." It weighed one hundred and fifty-seven tons twenty-nine pounds; and in clearness of execution, sublimity of conception, and richness of fancy it was equaled by perhaps only one work of its kind in that century — Ghiberti's great bronze gate in Florence. This fine piece of sculpture admits of many different interpretations, but the leading intention of the master seems to have been to represent the honor which the world paid to the Saviour. Deriving all good from Him, creatures glorified Him and returned to Him — nature with all her produce, heathendom with its heroic deeds and its natural virtues, the Old Testament with its prophets, and the New with the Apostles and saints. The Infant Christ, enthroned at the summit, holding the earth in His hand, typifies the beginning and the end of all creation. The statues of the Apostles are unsurpassed in expressiveness and masterly execution, though several of them certainly do not exhibit the solemn repose and serenity of the older plastic art; the unrestful attitudes of the figures strike one as an expression of the stirring religious life of the period.

12. In Northern Germany, the principal brass foundries were in Brunswick, Dortmund, Erfurt, Leipsic, Magdenburg, and Zwickau. One of the best examples of bronze work was the tabernacle in the Church of Our Lady of Lubeck; it was over thirty feet high, and was



SHRINE OF ST. SEBALD, NUREMBERG

Photograph by courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art

the joint work of the goldsmith Nicholas Rughesee and the founder Nicholas Gruden, in the year 1479.

The innumerable metal tablets in the floors and walls of the churches are interesting in many ways, and give a good idea of the notions of death current in the Middle Ages.

The art of bell-founding also reached perfection in the fifteenth century. The largest bells of the Cathedral of Cologne, cast in 1448 and 1449, that of St. Mary's Church in Dantzic, cast in 1453, that in Erfurt, 1497, excel all bells of earlier or later periods both in workmanship and ornamentation and in their musical beauty of tone. Side by side with metalwork, sculpture and carving in wood and stone also made immense strides at this period. Adam Krafft, the friend of Vischer, was the most celebrated and the most prolific among sculptors in stone; and by his simplicity, sterling worth, and warmth of heart, he was a good representative of the German character of the day. He may be compared to Albert Dürer in these respects. He surpassed all other German artists in his power of representing the sorrowful Passion of our Lord. Krafft's best works in Nuremberg belong to the years between 1490 and 1507. A story connected with his most famous sculptural achievement, The Seven Pictures of the Passion, affords good evidence of the religious spirit of the time. A citizen of Nuremberg named Martin Ketzel made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the 1477 in order to measure the exact distance between Pilate's house and Mount Calvary. Having lost the measure on his way home, he made a second pilgrimage in 1488, and in 1490 he commissioned Adam Krafft to erect seven stone pillars between his own house —(afterwards known as Pilate's house — and the St. John's cemetery according to the measure brought home. On each pillar was

a large representation in relief of a scene from the Passion, with a descriptive inscription and its exact distance from Pilate's house. They are most remarkable and touching groups, particularly the last, on which is inscribed: "Here lies Christ dead before His Blessed Mother, who with heartbroken grief weeps and mourns." The reclining dead body is carefully and tenderly supported by Joseph of Arimathea. The sorrowful Mother draws the head, from which the crown of thorns has just fallen, towards her. Mary Magdalen, at the Saviour's feet, wets the winding sheet with her tears. Each figure represents the deepest and sincerest feeling. The clothing is copied from the dress of the citizens of Nuremberg, which increases the realistic impression of the group.

A representation of the burial of Christ, executed by the same artist by order of the art connoisseur and curator, Sebald Schreyer, in the year 1492, is characterized by the same dignity and devotional feeling, with even greater grace of execution. Between the years 1496 and 1500 Krafft received a commission from Hans Imhoff to construct a tabernacle for the Church of St. Lawrence. It was sixty-four feet high and was supported by three kneeling figures, for which the artist and two of his apprentices served as models. Supported by three life-sized kneeling figures, it rises up like a beautiful flowery tree, whose branches and leaves grow out of the stone and end in an exquisitely carved, crozierlike blossom. The pillars are adorned with carved figures of saints, and the door is guarded by two angels. Whereas the Blessed Sacrament has been instituted as a commemoration of the redemptive death of Christ, the artist introduced into the work a series of scenes from the Passion, ending with the Resurrection, which stand for all believers as the great outcome of the Last Supper. The only work

which surpasses this one in beauty is the Sacraments-Haus in the Cathedral of Ulm, which was executed between 1461 and 1469 by the "Meister" von Weingarten at the order of Angelica Zaehringer. The latter is one of the best specimens dating from the Middle Ages. The carving is so delicate that it resembles lace-work. . . .

13. Among the various branches of pictorial art which flourished in Germany at the close of the fifteenth century, glass staining reached great perfection. Wherever it was not compelled to put on a monumental or purely decorative character, it stands uppermost in the production of easel pictures. With the simplest means and appliances the most brilliant effects were produced. The "cabinet glass staining" of the fifteenth century — to judge from the specimens in heraldic shields — may be considered as unsurpassable.

The guild system embraced this department of art also. Painters and glass stainers generally formed a brotherhood in common, and went in company on stated days to the service of God, to masses for the dead, and to social gatherings. Glass staining was practiced with great success in many of the monasteries. The Dominican Jacob Griesinger of Ulm (1491), gained great renown in Bologna by his method of burning in the colors, and he founded a school of his own, that beautiful yellow which is produced from silver. "He was a man of virtuous and godly life, and an example to all citizens and nobles." Glass stainers were met with in the monasteries of Clus (1486) and Walkenried (1515). In the convent of Weinhausen, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the lay sister Adelheid Schraders glazed and painted all the windows. About the same time a nun of St. Catherine's convent in the Nuremberg wrote a little German book

in which she gave instructions for making glass pictures in mosaic.

The glass paintings of Nuremberg, Ulm, and Cologne are the most famous and are worthy to be compared with those in the Church of Magdalen, and the Wilhelmiter Church in Strasburg. Those in the Nuremberg churches of St. Lawrence and St. Sebald are considered to be among the most beautiful in the world.

Veit Herschvogel, born in 1451, and descended from a family of glass stainers in Nuremberg, had no equal in his art. Among his finest works is the Volkamer Window in the Church of St. Lawrence, which represents the genealogical tree of Christ, and the patron saint and family of the donors. The two choir windows in the Cathedral of Ulm, which were ordered from Hans Wild by the city (1480), are among the most beautiful specimens of coloring which this art can produce. The five windows in the northern nave of the Cathedral of Cologne were executed in the year 1507-1509, and have become celebrated far and wide.

Nearly all the numerous works in glass painting in the monasteries have gone to ruin, only a few fragmentary remains being found here and there; as, for instance, specimens of the magnificent paintings of the Stations of the Cross in Hirschau, where the abbot Trithemius, in 1491, had forty windows illustrated with subjects taken from wood engravings in "The Bible of the Poor."

This glass painting was not confined to churches and cloisters. Stained glass windows were to be found in the castles, the city halls, the guild halls, and in the houses of the patricians. We find such artists as Holbein and Dürer supplying designs and drawings for these works. An Augsburg authority writes: "In former times there were no churches or public buildings, or even houses be-

longing to citizens in easy circumstances, which did not possess painted windows." This applies to all the larger cities, particularly in Southern Germany, where this industry flourished most.

14. Miniature painting was another branch of art which was brought to great perfection; it was held in such high repute, indeed, that the miniature painters — "the illuminators" — formed a separate guild in several cities. Prayer books especially were embellished by this species of art. In many convents all the nuns, even if their number mounted to forty or fifty, possessed each her own illuminated office book. It was a common thing for the greatest masters of painting to illuminate books destined as presents with pictures or pen-and-ink sketches. One of these, prepared by Dürer for the Emperor Maximilian, is remarkable for its taste and originality and the grotesque humor of its designs. . . .

15. All branches of art seem to go hand in hand, from architecture and sculpture to painting and embroidery. Exquisite specimens of carpets, vestments, and other ornaments, dating from the close of the fifteenth century, may still be seen in the Imperial Treasury at Vienna, in the Church at Eisleben, in the Cathedral and City Hall at Ratisbon, in the Cathedrals of Spires and Halberstadt, in the Churches of St. Lawrence and St. Sebald at Nuremberg, and in several churches in Cologne and elsewhere. Not only the vestments, but the carpets, the dresses of the nobles, the flags, and the trappings of the horses, were adorned with graceful and ingenious pictures or figures, which were designed by the decorator, or the first masters of the day. Those who did this kind of work were called "silk sewers," and the large number of these decorative artists shows what demand there was for this kind of thing.

After speaking of a silk embroiderer who had become so deft in the art that "out of pieces of silk he could imitate the human figure," Neudorfer writes: "As women took part in this art, I must not omit to bear witness to a proof of their perseverance. For years, when the ornamental work for churches had so developed, the ladies proved themselves clever and industrious, not alone in silk embroidery, but in tapestry, as is proved by the quantity of the tapestries, bench coverings, cushions, etc., to be found in the houses of the old families."

In the convents embroidered figures for the ornamentation of the churches were made in great quantities, and princesses and noble ladies joined in the work for the honor of God.

CHAPTER X

MYSTERY PLAYS

1. Mystery plays and the ancient drama. 2. The beginning of the movement. 3. The number of actors. 4. The subject matter of the plays. 5. The magnitude of the productions. 6. Pageant money. 7. The educational effects of the plays. 8. Religious and social effects. 9. The cycles. 10. Comments of Gasquet on the cycles. 11. Scenes from the *Golden Legend*. 12. Introduction of comic scenes. 13. Preparation for the age of Shakespeare. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. There is no connection between the mystery plays which began in the eleventh century and reached their perfection in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the ancient drama of Greece or Rome. The religious plays of the Middle Ages resulted from a spontaneous outburst of the people under the guidance and direction of the Church. In many a primitive little Italian town today, in the Corpus Christi procession, members of the parish take the parts of the Prophets and the Apostles. Some of the little children are dressed as shepherds, others wear blue gowns and wreaths and represent the Blessed Virgin, while others with an aureola around their heads impersonate the Infant Jesus. Such processions were the rude beginnings of the mystery plays which formed so important a part of the social and religious life of Europe during the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the twelfth century the movement was well under way. Plays grew in number and magnificence during the following centuries and came down to the very time of Shakespeare.

A distinction must be made between the miracle play and the mystery play. The former was given on the feast day of some saint and depicted an incident connected with the life of the saint. If a Scripture event was used, it was a detached scene and not a part of a unified presentation. The mystery plays were always founded on Scripture subjects and were intended to set forth the mysteries of the Christian religion. The scenes were connected; they began with the creation of man, represented the principal events of the Old and New Testaments, and concluded with the Ascension into heaven, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, or the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in heaven. In England at a later period the terms miracle play and mystery play were confused; but in France the distinction was carefully preserved. All of the four cycles are examples of mystery plays.

2. As far as can be learned, the first mystery play was given in England in the year 1110. It is only by chance that we have a record of it, as there arose a dispute over the return of some copes which had been borrowed from the Abbey of St. Albans for the use of the actors. The first plays were performed in the churches or on stages erected at the entrance of the churches. We find records, too, of the plays given in the graveyards adjacent to the holy edifices. At this early period the clergy were among the principal actors.

3. These religious plays were the people's principal means of diversion during a time when life was simple. Among the grown people of both sexes, and even among the very children, there was an unbroken interest covering practically the entire year. The records which have come down to us are sufficiently complete to show the number of actors and the general interest of the themes. In one

of the pageants of Corpus Christi given in England in 1415 there were no less than forty-nine guilds represented. The play was a great epic poem beginning with creation, describing the fall of man, the symbolical offerings of the Old Testament, the entire life of Christ, with His death, resurrection and ascension in triumph to heaven, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Each one of the forty-eight scenes required many actors. For instance, in the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem there were the twelve Apostles, six rich and six poor men, and eight boys carrying palms. In one of the closing scenes, in which there were new performers, because it was enacted by a different guild, we again find the twelve Apostles, eight angels, with fourteen good and evil spirits.

4. The subject matter of the mystery plays and their popularity in the communities of central Europe are admirably set forth by Janssen:[1]

"In the latter years of the Middle Ages each part of Our Lord's career on earth, from the Nativity to the Ascension, used to be made the subject of sacred representation. But the story of the Passion and the Resurrection held the most prominent position. The Easter plays were the most carefully worked up, and displayed the greatest variety of illustrations, for their object was to develop the great plan of the world's redemption. They began with the fall of Lucifer and his angels and their expulsion from heaven. The tree of knowledge was made the type of the Cross. Adam, dying, sends Seth to the Garden of Paradise to procure him a fruit from the tree of life. The latter receives from a cherub, who sits at the gate, a twig from the tree which will cure his father and give him eternal life; but Adam having expired in his absence, Seth plants the twig on his grave, and from

[1] Janssen, *History of the German People*, 16 vols., vol. I, p. 270.

it grows the tree which was to supply the wood of the Cross.

"By way of prologue to these performances representations of the Redeemer were often introduced, followed by some of the scenes and miracles of His life. Then came the awful tragedy of the Passion, the glorious scene of the Easter Resurrection, and not unfrequently scenes of the Last Judgment followed the whole. Like the most sublime epic, so is the Christian drama tragic in its nature, and it is equally fitting that Christian and profane history should alike close with the Final Judgment.

"Besides the sacred plays which were concerned with the life of Our Lord, and which formed the principal group of these ancient dramatic compositions, there were others relating to the Blessed Virgin. Of this class some were devoted to her exclusively, some to the Mother and Son together; others illustrated some parable or legend, while others again, referred to the Antichrist and the Judgment.

"At first these mystery plays were composed exclusively in Latin. By degrees the Latin songs, scattered here and there, became Germanized, and finally the old text was replaced entirely by a new German text. The German drama and German sacred song were closely interwoven one with the other. The lyric-dramatic *Marienklagen* (Dolors of Mary) belonged to the one almost as much as to the other.

"The mystery plays became so popular that in the fourteenth century they were played by the people in the village churches, and as a proof of their popularity it is attested that they were not written, but, like the epics of old, handed down like tradition from one generation to another.

"As long as it remained the custom to give these repre-

sentations in the churches the stage was always erected under the choir loft. Later they were held in the churchyard and in the market place. Here the actors assembled — not professional ones, for there was no charge for admission — but the ecclesiastics and scholars in the higher schools, and such citizens as were willing to take the female characters or wished to witness the performance. Following the example of the painters, who clothed their saints according to the fashions of the day, the costumes were of local fashion. God the Father, the angels and the prophets, were represented in priestly vestments, but Christ always in bishop's robes. It was a matter of earnest religious feeling both to the actors and the audience, and the performance always began with the invocation, 'Let us pray the Holy Spirit to preserve us in the faith until we leave this vale of tears for our true home. Kyrie eleison!'

"Let me quote the introduction to the play of *St. Dorothea* as an example of the prologues. 'In all his undertakings man should invoke God's help with earnestness, in order to accomplish his work with less sin and more merit. May God and the Holy Virgin now assist us! Let us all join in saying the canticle of the Holy Ghost.'

"The manager appeared as one of the saints, generally as St. Augustine, or sometimes as Virgil, and explained the period and circumstances of the representation. Each actor advanced to the front of the stage, repeated his part, and retired. The choir boys sang the accompanying hymns, and at the conclusion all went to a church service or joined in singing some appropriate hymn — after the Easter play, for instance, 'Christ is arisen,' or 'Jesus, mild and holy.'

"These plays generally took place in the afternoon, lasted several days, and required a large number of

actors, especially at the close of the fifteenth century, when all branches of art had arrived at such perfection. In 1498 a passion play was acted at Frankfort-on-the-Main which lasted four days, and gave such universal satisfaction that it had to be repeated that same year. We read in some of the documents of the Archives: 'Those who took part in the passion play in front of the Romer played each afternoon until the Angelus, for four consecutive days, and appeared in fine and appropriate costumes.'

"A four days' representation of the passion and Easter play, ending with the Ascension into Heaven, which was given at Frankfort in 1506, required as many as 276 actors. This was followed by a kind of church epic, in which two actors, surrounded by Christians and Jews, representing the Church and the Synagogue, held a discussion, at the close of which eight or ten of the Jews were baptized by the actor representing St. Augustine, the Synagogue sending up a wail of lamentation, while the Church sang an alleluia in which the audience joined."

5. We have an instance of twenty-seven parishes in England uniting to present the play of St. George. To secure the necessary room for the stage and scenery, and space for the great concourse of people, a large field was hired. A suitable stage was erected, and ample provision was made for the concourse of the thousands who flocked in from the country and townships to witness this enormous production.[1]

6. As these pageants grew in size and splendor there was naturally connected with them a great expense. The money needed to carry on this work was levied upon each member of the guild and was known as "pageant money." Sometimes the players received payment, as

[1] August Jessopp, *Before the Great Pillage*, p. 46.

for instance in the Coventry passion play of 1490. There has come down to our time the record of the expense, not only for the actors, but for their meals during the time of rehearsal and presentation of the play. Mention is made of the cost of the wine, of beef, of a goose, of bread and ale, of gloves, and of work in preparation for the pageant. By degrees pageant-masters who had given the best proof of their ability were chosen to direct the work. It was their duty to select the various actors and to train them for their parts.

7. Among other effects which must have resulted from the universal use of these religious plays, the first was that they were a powerful means of instructing the people. Books in those days were costly and difficult to obtain, and education was far from being universal; and yet by these simple representations the people came to a knowledge of all the essential truths of their holy religion. These religious teachings were placed before them in a way that appealed to the imagination and vividly impressed them upon the minds of the spectators. They saw their holy religion represented, not in a fragmentary way, but in its entirety. They were taught the connection between the Old and the New Testament, and how all the promises of the former led up to and were verified in the foundation of the Church. There was not a religious personage of any distinction in the Old Testament with whose principal lifework they were not familiar. They saw our first parents in the garden of Eden; they saw the representation of Abel's death, of Noah and the flood, of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, with all the other leaders and prophets of Israel, passing before them gorgeously attired. Then came the scenes of the New Testament, beginning with the touching story of the Crib and giving every detail of the life, death and triumph

of Christ, and the founding of His Church. These plays were the books in which the simple people read the truths of their holy religion, and read them in such a way that they could not be forgotten.

8. Let us now turn to the religious and social effects which these plays must have had upon the actors, most of whom were members of guilds. There was a holy rivalry here which spurred on every member of a guild to do his best. Not only was he developing his own latent talent, but he became a friendly critic of other guild members and sought to improve upon their work. With preparation of these great pageants monotony in the medieval town or city was impossible. This participation in the great religious and civic event of the community gave the guild members a place of distinction. He was not only a workman, but at some time during each year he was a man on whom the community looked with honor and interest. As children grew up and year after year watched these magnificent productions, an ambition would be created in their own young minds later to play the part of a great personage in one of these religious pageants.

9. In England especially the mystery plays took on a characteristic form known as the "cycles," so called because they went from one part of a city to another. Four collections of these plays have come down to us: Chester, York, Towneley, and Coventry.

"The whole town was made to serve as a huge theater, and the many pageants proceeded in due order from station to station. 'The place,' says Archdeacon Rogers — he is speaking of Chester — 'the place where they played was in every streete. They begane first at the abay gates, and when the first pagiant was played, it was wheeled to the highe crosse before the mayor, and so

to every streete; and soe every streete had a pagiant playinge before them at one time till all the pagiantes for the daye appoynted weare played.' The cycles were the pride of the city, and it would have been a point of honor with the members of several companies not to allow themselves to be outclassed by their competitors. 'A high scafold with two rowmes, a higher and lower, upon four wheeles. In the lower they apparelled themselves, and in the higher rowme they played, beinge all open on the tope, that all behoulders might heare and see them.' The pageants were constructed of wood and iron, and so thoroughly that it was seldom that they needed to be renewed. In the floor of the stage were trapdoors covered with rushes. The whole was supported on four or six wheels so as to facilitate movement from point to point; and as the miracle plays were essentially peripatetic — within at least the bounds of a particular town, and sometimes beyond — this was a very necessary provision."[1]

10. Gasquet has given us an estimate of the literary value of the cycle plays and their influence upon the lives of the people:

"The subjects treated of in these plays were varied, although those that were acted on the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, the Ascension, etc., generally had some relation to the mystery then celebrated. In such a collection of plays as that known as the Towneley Mysteries we have examples of the subjects treated of in the religious plays of the period. The collection makes no pretense of being complete, and yet it contains some three and thirty plays, including the Creation, the death of Abel, the story of Noah, the sacrifice of Isaac, and other Old Testament histories; a great number of scenes from the

[1] F. J. Snell, *The Customs of Old England*, p. 50.

New Testament, such as the Annunciation, the Visitation, Caesar Augustus, scenes from the Nativity, the Shepherds, the Magi, etc., as well as various scenes from the Passion and Crucifixion, the Parable of the Talents, etc.

"Any one who will take the trouble to read, not skim, the plays as printed in this volume cannot fail to be impressed, not only with the vivid picture of the special scenes, but by the extensive knowledge of the Bible which the production of these plays must have imparted to those who listened to them, and by the way that incidentally the most important religious truths were conveyed in crude and rugged verse. Again and again, for instance, the entire dependence of all created things upon the province of God Almighty is asserted and illustrated. This, the confession of God's omnipotence, put into the mouth of Noah at the beginning of the play of *Noah and his Sons*, contains a profession of belief in the Holy Trinity, and a declaration concerning the work of the Three Persons in the world. It describes the creation of the world, the fall of Lucifer, the sin of our first parents, and their expulsion from paradise.

"Whatever we may think of these religious dramas now, there can be no doubt that the people in the pre-Reformation days delighted in them, and that they formed one of the most popular features in medieval parochial life." [1]

11. Longfellow in the *Golden Legend* (section III) gives the first part of a mystery play, or, as he entitles it, a miracle play. It deals only with the Nativity and childhood of Christ and contains nine scenes:

I. Heaven.
II. Mary at the Well.

[1] Cardinal Gasquet, *Parish Life in Medieval England*, p. 252.

III. Angels of the Seven Planets, bearing the Star of Bethlehem.
IV. The Wise Men of the East.
V. The Flight into Egypt.
VI. The Slaughter of the Innocents.
VII. Jesus at Play with His Schoolmates.
VIII. The Village School.
IX. Crowned with Flowers.

A comparison of the play with any one of the four cycles will make it evident that Longfellow grasped the religious spirit of the time. We cite the prologue and epilogue, together with the ninth act, as specimens of the poem.

The Nativity

Prologue

Come, good people, all and each,
Come and listen to our speech!
In your presence here I stand,
With a trumpet in my hand,
To announce the Easter Play,
Which we represent today.
First of all we shall rehearse,
In our action and our verse,
The Nativity of our Lord,
As written in the old record
Of the Protoevangelion,
So that he who reads may run.

(*Blows his trumpet.*)

Crowned with Flowers

Boys

We spread our garments on the ground.
With fragrant flowers thy head is crowned,
While like a guard we stand around
And hail thee as our King.
Thou art the new King of the Jews.
Nor let the passers-by refuse

To bring that homage which men use
To majesty to bring.

(*Here a traveler shall go by, and the boys shall lay hold of his garments and say*):

Boys

Come hither! and all reverence pay
Unto our monarch, crowned today!
Then go rejoicing on your way,
In all prosperity!

Traveler

Hail to the King of Bethlehem,
Who weareth in his diadem
The yellow crocus for the gem
Of his authority!

(*He passes by, and others come in bearing on a litter a sick child.*)

Boys

Set down the litter and draw near!
The King of Bethlehem is here!
What ails the child, who seems to fear
That we shall do him harm?

The Bearers

He climbed up to the robin's nest,
And out there darted from his rest
A serpent with a crimson crest,
And stung him in the arm.

Jesus

Bring him to me, and let me feel
The wounded place; my touch can heal
The sting of serpents, and can steal
The poison from the bite.

(*He touches the wound, and the boy begins to cry.*)

Cease to lament. I can foresee
That thou hereafter known shalt be,
Among the men who follow me,
As Simon the Canaanite.

Mystery Play: The Nativity — Thirteenth Century

Miracle Play, England, 1300 A.D.

EPILOGUE

In the after part of the day
Will be represented another play,
Of the Passion of our Blessed Lord,
Beginning directly after Nones.
At the close of which we shall accord,
By the way of benison and reward,
The sight of holy martyr's bones.

12. From the account of the religious element of the mystery plays it must not be inferred that every part of the production was of a serious nature. Longfellow in his *Golden Legend* has caught the spirit of the Middle Ages. We may object to a few of his interpretations, but as a whole the poem is historically suggestive of the time of which he wrote. We shall find there a commingling of the serious with everyday topics and events of life; and the final triumph of good shows that the author well understood the theme which he had attempted. In most of the religious plays many characters were introduced for which there is no warrant in Scripture, and even those of Scripture origin are made to enact scenes which are the inventions of the author. For instance, in one of the representations of the flood the audience is amused, in a long diversion, by the obstinacy of Noah's wife, who plainly gives her husband a bit of her mind, and refuses to go with him into the clumsy boat which he has constructed or to believe his predictions in regard to the threatening flood. Again during one of the scenes of the Nativity the rude shepherds play an important part. They engage in sports and contests and amuse the spectators in many ways, and add diversity to the otherwise serious production. Soldiers wrangle over the garments of Christ during the solemn representation of the Crucifixion. As these religious dramas drew a great crowd of

people, merchants and venders of various wares took the opportunity to make the occasion one of profit. Clowns and mountebanks, tumblers and wrestlers, and people of every class looking for notoriety or for an occasion of a little gain, mingled with the crowd and in diversified ways relieved the solemnity of the religious representation. Punch and Judy shows were of this origin and added joy and merriment to the occasions.

13. Just as the statues and church windows were wonderful means of educating the people, so too were these religious dramas a source of inspiration and enlightenment. These representations prepared the minds of the people for that great enthusiasm and desire for knowledge which followed the invention of printing. "The last play of the York circle was in 1579, when Shakespeare was a young man. The New Castle plays lasted ten years longer, when his career as a dramatist had begun. The Chester plays were acted till the end of the century; the Beverley until 1604, when Shakespeare's work was drawing to a close. . . . 'The harrowing of Hell' in the Porter's speech in *Macbeth*, is perhaps the most notable trace which it has left on the drama of the Shakespearian age. But the miracle plays had fostered a love of acting in almost every county of England. They had prepared the ground from which the Shakespearian harvest was to spring in all its glorious abundance."[1]

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Read the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on mystery plays.
2. Is there any connection between the mystery plays and the ancient drama?
3. In what way did these plays instruct the people?

[1] A. W. Pollard, *English Miracle Plays*, Introduction.

4. What were miracle plays?

5. Who took part in these plays? How many actors were there?

6. When and where were they produced and what subjects were treated?

7. How were these plays a means of promoting the social position of the actors?

8. We say that the drama has been commercialized. What is the meaning of this?

9. In the Middle Age the mystery plays were a part of the social life of the community. Explain.

10. What was the relation of the mystery plays to the guilds?

11. How did the plays give prestige to the guild members?

12. What is meant by the "Cycles"?

13. Why were comic scenes introduced?

14. Can it be proved from the nature of the mystery plays that the taste of the people was refined?

15. You will notice that most of the social work of the Middle Ages was preventive. Compare with our time.

16. Was Shakespeare influenced by the mystery plays?

17. What should be done to improve the theater in your own community?

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CHAPTER XI

THE MYSTERY PLAYS

Continued

The Mystery Plays in England[1]

1. The rise of the cycles. 2. Difficulty of expenses. 3. Municipal organizations. 4. Financial obligations of the craft guilds. 5. Privileges claimed by the guilds. 6. Parochial and minor plays. 7. Various types of plays. 8. The arrangement of the stage; number of stations. 9. Duties of players and managers. 10. Assistance of professional musicians. 11. Properties and playbooks. 12. Authorship.

1. The English miracle play reaches its full development with the great processional cycles almost immediately after the establishment of the Corpus Christi festival in 1311. The local tradition of Chester, stripped of a certain confusion between the names of two distinct mayors of that city which has clung about it, is found to fix the foundation of the Chester plays in 1328. The date has the authority of an official municipal document, forms part of a quite consistent story, several points in which can be independently corroborated, and is on *a priori* grounds extremely plausible. Unfortunately, owing to the comparative scarcity of archives during this period, the first fifty years of the history of municipal drama are practically a blank. There is no actual record of plays at Chester itself until 1462. Those of Beverley are first

[1] From *The Medieval Stage*, by E. K. Chambers, vol. II, cc. 21, 22. Clarendon Press, 1903. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

mentioned in 1377, those of York in 1378, and those of Coventry in 1392.

It is in 1378 that the earliest notice of plays in London, since the days of William Fitzstephen, comes to light. The fuller records which are from this time onward available reveal, during the next hundred and fifty years, a vigorous and widespread dramatic activity throughout the length and breadth of the land. It manifests itself at such extreme points as the Cinque Ports in the east, Cornwall in the west, and Newcastle in the north. It penetrates to Aberdeen and to Dublin. And though naturally it finds its fullest scope in the annually repeated performances of several amongst the greater cities, yet it is curious to observe in what insignificant villages it was from time to time found possible to organize plays. Performers from thirteen neighboring places, many of them quite small, made their way to New Romney between 1399 and 1598; whilst the churchwardens of Chelmsford, in the twelve years after their own play in 1562, reaped a profit by hiring out their stock of garments to the men of some seventeen aspiring parishes.

There were several important towns in which, so far as we can judge from documents, such as craft ordinances, which would almost certainly have referred to the plays of the crafts, if these had existed, the normal type of municipal drama failed to establish itself. London is one, although here the want was supplied in another way; others are Northampton, Nottingham, Bristol, Oxford, and Reading. And occasionally plays which had once been annual were allowed to fall into desuetude and decay. The corporation of Canterbury, for instance, called upon the crafts about 1500 to revive a Corpus Christ play which for some time had been "left and laid apart." Certainly, by the sixteenth century, if there was still

pride and interest taken in many of the municipal plays, signs were not wanting that they were an institution which had almost outlived its day.

2. No doubt the plays were a financial burden upon the poorer crafts and the poorer members of crafts. There was much grumbling at Beverley in 1411 because certain well-to-do persons, who did not practice any trade or handicraft, had hitherto escaped the payment of contributions to the civic function; and municipal authorities were constantly called upon to adjust and readjust the responsibility for this and that pageant with the fluctuations of prosperity amongst the various occupations. But on the other hand, the plays were the cause of much and profitable resort to those fortunate towns which possessed them. The mercers' guild at Shrewsbury found it necessary to impose a special fine upon those of its members whose business avocations required them "to goe to Coventrie Faire" at Corpus Christi tide, and so to miss the procession of guilds at home. And although the mayor of Coventry wrote to Thomas Cromwell, in 1539, that the poor commoners were put to such expense with their plays and pageants that they fared the worse all the year after; yet against this may be set the statement made to Dugdale by "some old people who had in their younger days been eyewitnesses of these pageants" that "the confluence of people from farr and neare to see that shew was extraordinary great, and yielded noe small advantage to the cittye." Moreover the levy upon individuals was a trifling one; the whole company of smiths at Coventry only paid 3s. 4d. amongst them for "pagent pencys" in 1552.

3. The characteristic English type of play was the long cycle given annually under the superintendence of the corporation or governing body of an important city and

divided into a number of distinct scenes or pageants, each of which was the special charge of one or more of the local crafts, arts, or occupations. Such cycles, organized upon very similar lines, can be studied in the records available from Chester, York, Beverley, Coventry, Newcastle, Lincoln, and Norwich, and the same general model, is known or conjectured — sometimes, it is true, on the slightest indications — to have been followed in the plays of Lancaster, Preston, Kendal, Wakefield, Leicester, Worcester, Louth, Bungay, Canterbury, Dublin, and Aberdeen.

As in all matters of municipal custom, the relative functions of the corporations and the crafts were nicely adjusted. The direction and control of the plays as a whole were in the hands of the corporations. They decided annually whether the performance should be given, or whether, for war, pestilence, or other reason, it should be withheld. They sent round their officers to read the proclamation or "banns" of the play. They kept an official version of the text, at Chester an original, at York a "register" copied from the originals belonging to the crafts. Agreements and disputes as to the liability of this or that craft to maintain or contribute to a particular pageant were entered or determined before them. They maintained order at the time of the play and inflicted fines on the turbulent, or upon crafts neglectful or unskilled in carrying out their responsibilities. In particular they required the provision of properly qualified actors. Thus in 1440 Robert Greene and others of Coventry were admonished that they should play their parts well so as not to cause a hindrance to others. Similarly, Henry Cowper was fined by the wardens of Beverley in 1452 because he did not know his lines. An order at York in 1476 directed the choice of a body of experienced and

able players to test the quality of all those selected as actors.

At York and Beverley, but not at Coventry, the corporations paid the minstrels, and occasionally made a special contribution to the funds of a particularly poor pageant. At York the corporation could well afford to do this, for they claimed the right to fix certain stations at which, as well as at two or three traditional ones, the plays should be given, and they made a considerable annual profit out of payments by well-to-do citizens who aspired to have one of these at their doors. The stations were marked by banners broidered with the arms of the city. At Beverley in 1391 the corporations owned all the pageant garments and properties of the play of Paradise, and lent the same upon security to the craft charged therewith. The pageant may also have been originally corporation property in York, for it was stipulated in 1422 that one of them, like the banners at the stations, should bear the arms of the city, to the exclusion of those of the craft.

4. As a rule, the cost of the plays fell almost wholly upon the crafts. The ordinances of the craft guilds provided for their maintenance as a fraternal duty, in the same way as they often provide for a light to be burned in some chapel or carried in the Corpus Christi procession, or, at Beverley, for the seats in which the craft sat to do honor to the procession of St. John of Beverley in Rogation week. At Coventry, where the burden upon the crafts was perhaps heaviest, they were responsible for the provision, repairing, ornamenting, cleaning, and strewing with rushes of the pageant, for the rent of the pageant house, for the payment of actors, minstrels, and prompter, for the revision of playbook and song and the copying of parts, for the "drawing" or "horsing" of the pageant

on the day of the performance, for costumes and properties, and above all for copious refreshments before and after the play, at the stations and during the preliminary rehearsals. The total cost of the smiths' pageant in 1490 was £3 7s. 5d.

It was more usual for the crafts to retain the management of the pageants in their own hands; at York each guild appointed its pageant masters for this purpose. The expense to the craft primarily in charge of a pageant was sometimes lightened by fixed contributions from one or more minor bodies affiliated to it for the purpose. Part of it was probably met from the general funds of the craft; the rest was raised by various expedients. A levy, known as "pagent pencys" at Coventry and as "pajaunt silver" at York, was made upon every member. The amount varied with the numbers of the craft and the status of the craftsmen. At York it ranged from 1d. to 8d. At Coventry the ordinary members of more than one craft paid 1s.; others apparently less. To the proceeds of the levy might be added fines for the breach of craft ordinances, payments on the taking out of freedom by strangers and the setting up of shop or indenturing of apprentices by freemen. At York, the mercers are found granting free admission to a candidate for their fraternity on condition of his entering into a favorable contract for the supply of a new pageant. At Coventry, in 1517, one William Pisford left a scarlet and a crimson gown to the tanners for their plays, together with 3s. 4d. to every craft charged with the maintenance of a pageant. Besides the levy, certain personal services were binding upon the craftsmen. They had to attend upon the play, to do it honor; the Coventry cappers expected their journeymen to do the "horsing" of the pageant.

In some cities, the crafts received help from the outside.

At Coventry, in 1501, the tilers' pageant got a contribution of 5s. from the neighboring tilers of Stoke. At Chester, vestments were borrowed from the clergy; at Lincoln from the priory and the local gentry. A "gathering" was also made in the surrounding districts. The only trace of any charge made to the spectators, other than the fees for stations at York, is at Leicester, where, in 1477, the players paid over to the pageants certain sums they had received for playing.

5. The majority of the crafts in a big city were, of course, already formed into guilds for ordinary trade purposes, and in their case the necessary organization for the plays was to hand. But no citizen could wholly escape his responsibility in so important a civic matter. At Coventry it was ordered in 1494 that every person exercising any craft must become contributory to some pageant or other. At York the innholders, who do not appear to have a regular guild, were organized in 1483 for the purposes of a pageant on the basis of a yearly contribution of 4d. from each man. It may be suspected that some of the other crafts named in the same list such as the husbandmen and the laborers, were not regular guilds.

At York the hospital of St. Leonard took the Purification in 1415; at Lincoln the cathedral clergy, like the priests at Beverley, were responsible for the Coronation or Assumption of the Virgin, a play which at Chester was given by the "worshipfull wyves of this town," and at York by the innholders. Both at York and Chester this scene was dropped at the Reformation. Possibly its somewhat exceptional position may be accounted for by its having been a comparatively late addition in all four cycles.

Some endeavor after dramatic appropriateness is visible

in the apportioning of the other plays amongst the crafts. Thus the part of Noah is given to the shipwrights at York and Newcastle, to the watermen at Beverley and Chester, to the fishers and marines at York; the Magi to the goldsmiths at Beverley, Newcastle and York; the Disputation in the Temple to the scriveners at Beverley; the Last Supper to the bakers at Beverley, Chester and York; the Harrowing of Hell to the cooks at Beverley and Chester.

A somewhat anomalous position is occupied amongst towns in which the plays were in the hands of the crafts by Lincoln. Here the task of supervision was shared with the corporation by a special guild, religious and social rather than industrial in character, of St. Anne. Perhaps the guild had at one time been solely responsible for the plays, and there had been a crisis such as took place at Norwich in 1527. Before that date the charge of the plays had been borne, fittingly enough, by the guild of St. Luke, composed of painters and metal workers. But in 1527 this guild was "almost fully decayed," and upon the representation of its members the corporation agreed that in future the pageant should be distributed amongst the various crafts as was customary elsewhere. The Lincoln plays were on St. Anne's day, but one does not find a position comparable to that of the St. Anne's guild held by Corpus Christi guilds in other towns. As a rule such guilds concerned themselves with the Corpus Christi procession, but as such were not called upon; but this Ipswich guild arose out of a reorganization of the old merchant guild, included all the burgesses, and was practically identical with the corporation. Other towns, in which the corporation managed the plays itself, without the intervention of the craft guilds, are Shrewsbury, New Romney, and Lydd.

6. Where there were craft plays, social and religious guilds sometimes gave supplementary preformances. The parochial guilds of St. Dunstan's Canterbury, owned a play of Abraham and Isaac in 1491. This may have been merely a contribution towards the craft cycle on Corpus Christi day. On the other hand, the play of St. George, contemplated by the guild of that saint at New Romney in 1490, was probably an independent undertaking. The town play here was a Passion play. At York there were two rivals to the Corpus Christi plays. One was the Paternoster play, for the production of which a guild of the Lord's Prayer was in existence at least as early as 1378. By 1488 this guild was absorbed into the Holy Trinity guild of the mercers, and in the year named the play was given, apparently at the charges of the mercers, instead of the ordinary cycle. All the crafts contributed to similar performances in 1558 and 1572. But by this time the supervision, under the corporation, of the play had passed to one of the few religious guilds in York which had escaped suppression, that of St. Anthony. The other extraordinary York play was a Creed play, bequeathed to the guild of Corpus Christi in 1446. This was stationary, and was acted decennially at the common hall. In 1535 the crafts paid for it instead of their usual cycle. Upon the suppression of the guild, the playbook passed into the custody of the hospital of St. Thomas.

Many minor plays, both in towns and in country villages, were organized by the clergy and other officials of parish churches, and are mentioned in the account books of church wardens. The parochial organization was the natural one for the smaller places, where the parish church had remained the center of the popular life.

Parochial plays, whether in town or country, appear

to have been in most cases occasional, rather than annual. Sometimes, as at Kingston and Braintree, they became a means of raising money for the church, and even where this object is not apparent, the expenses were lightened in various ways at the cost of neighboring villages. "Banns" were sent round to announce the play; or the play itself was carried round on tour. Twenty-seven villages contributed to a play at Bassingbourne in 1511. The Chelmsford play of 1562 and 1563 cost about £50, of which a good proportion was received from the spectators. The play was given at Malden and Braintree as well as at Chelmsford, and for years afterwards the letting out of the stock of garments proved a source of revenue to the parish. This same practice of hiring garments can be traced at Oxford, Leicester, and elsewhere. The parochial plays were always, so far as can be seen, stationary. At Leicester, Braintree, Halstead, and Heybridge they were in the church. That of Harling was at the church gate, that of Bassingbourne, in an open field.

7. The variation in the types of English miracle plays naturally implies some variation also in the manner of representation. The normal craft cycles of the greater towns were processional in character. They were not played throughout by a single body of actors and upon a single stage; but the action was divided into a number of independent scenes, to each of which was assigned its own group of performers and its own small movable stage or pageant. And each scene was repeated at several stations in different parts of the city, pageant succeeding pageant in regular order, with the general effect of a vast procession slowly unrolling itself along the streets. This method of playing was convenient to the distribution of the expenses among the guilds, and

was adopted in all those places, Chester, York, Beverley, and Coventry, from which our records happen to be the fullest. But it was not the primitive method and probably arose from an attempt about the beginning of the fourteenth century to adapt the already existing miracle plays to the distinctive feature of the festival of Corpus Christi. The processional play was rare outside of England, and even in England it at no period became universal. Two at least of the great cycles that survive, the Cornish one and the Coventry, as well as several smaller plays, can be clearly shown from internal evidence to have been intended for stationary performances. They do not naturally cleave asunder into distinct scenes. The same personages appear and reappear; the same properties and bits of scenery are left and returned to, often at considerable intervals.

As to the pageant or movable stage of the processional plays, a good deal of information is preserved. Dugdale describes it at Coventry as a very large and high theater placed upon wheels; Rogers at Chester as "a highe place made like a howse with two rowmes, beinge open on the tope; in the lower rowme they apparelled and dressed themselues; and in the higher rowme they played; and they stood upon wheeles." According to an inventory of 1565 the grocers' pageant at Norwich was "a houwse paynted and buylded on a carte." About it were hung three painted cloths. Similar adornments of the pageant were in use at Coventry. At York it bore the arms of the city or of the guild. M. Jusserand has unearthed from a Bodleian manuscript two fourteenth century miniatures which apparently represent pageants. These have draperies covering the whole of the lower room down to the ground, and resemble nothing so much as the ambulant theater of a Punch and Judy show.

8. The pageants were probably arranged so that the action might be visible from every side; the scenery would therefore be simple; certain plays, however, necessitated a divided scene, such as the inside and outside of a temple. For the hell the traditional monstrous head on a lower level, with chains and fire, was required. The pageant used for the Flood scene was doubtless shaped like an ark. The ship belonging to the Trinity guild of Hull cost £5 8*s*. 4*d*. At Lincoln three times as much was charged for housing the ship as for any other pageant.

The number of stations at which the plays were given varied in the different towns. At York there were from twelve to sixteen; at Beverley six; at Coventry not more than three or four can be identified. The many scenes and frequent repetitions naturally made the processional plays very lengthy affairs. At Chester they were spread over three days; at York they were got through in one, but playing began at half past four in the morning. At Newcastle, on the other hand, the plays were in the afternoon. The banns of the Coventry play promised a performance at six of the bell; but whether in the morning or evening is not stated.

The normal occasion for the greater plays was the feast of Corpus Christi on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. A few exceptions are, however, to be noted. At Chester, Norwich, New Romney, and apparently Leicester, the date chosen was Whitsuntide. Yet at Chester the play is called the Corpus Christi play in craft documents of the fifteenth century, and even in the municipal White Book of the sixteenth; from which it must be inferred either that the term was used for all cyclical plays without regard to their date, or, more probably, that at Chester a performance originally given on Corpus Christi day

had been for some reason transferred to Whitsuntide. The motive may have been a desire to avoid clashing between the plays and the great Corpus Christi procession in which the crafts everywhere took a prominent part. A difficulty arose on this score at York in 1426, and a Franciscan preacher, one William Melton, tried to induce the citizens to have the plays on the day before Corpus Christi. Ultimately the alternative was adopted of having the procession on the day after. At Lincoln the plays were on St. Anne's day and the last pageant was acted by the clergy in the nave of the cathedral.

9. The direction of the actors was an important element in the civic control of the craft plays. The mention at York of a commission of experienced and able players must not be taken to imply that these were in any sense professionals. All the actors received fees, on a scale proportionate to the dignity of their parts. Thus, at Coventry one Fawston got 4*d.* for hanging Judas and 4*d.* more for cock crowing. The payment to the performer of God was 3*s.* 4*d.* A "sowle, whether savyd or dampnyd," got 20*d.*, and a "worme of conscyence" only 8*d.* At Hull, Noah was generally paid 1*s.*, God and Noah's wife a trifle less. But there is nothing to show that the performers were drawn from the minstrel class; they were probably members of the guilds undertaking the plays.

A characteristic of the acting which greatly impressed the imagination of the audience seems to have been the rant and bombast put from very early times in the mouths of such royal or pseudo royal personages as Herod and Pilate. In the Chester plays fragments of French, as in a liturgical play fragments of gibberish, are used to enhance this effect. In the Cornish plays, as in the modern music hall, each performer at his first appearance dis-

plays himself in a preliminary strut about the stage. As is usually the case with amateurs, the function of the prompter became an exceedingly important one. If the Cornish writer Richard Carew may be trusted, the local players did not learn their parts at all, but simply repeated them aloud after the whispers of the prompter. Probably this was exceptional; it certainly was not the practice at Beverley, where there is a record of an actor being fined for forgetting his lines. Another functionary who occasionally appears is the stage manager. The great Chelmsford performance of 1562 was superintended by one Burles who was paid, with others, for his work, and who probably came from a distance, as he and his boy were boarded for three weeks.

10. The professional assistance of the minstrels, although not called in for the acting, was welcome for the music. This was a usual and a considerable item in the expenses. At the Chelmsford performances just mentioned the waits of Bristol and no less than forty other minstrels were employed. There is no sign of a musical accompaniment to the dialogue of the existing plays, which were spoken, and not, like that of their liturgical forerunners, chanted. But the York and Coventry texts contain some noted songs, and several plays have invitations to the minstrels to strike up at the conclusion or between the scenes. Minstrels are also found accompanying the proclaimers of the banns or preliminary announcements of plays. These banns seem to have been versified like the plays themselves. They are often mentioned, and several copies exist. Those of Chester were proclaimed by the city crier on St. George's day; those of the Croxton and the Coventry were carried round the country side by banner-bearers.

11. The accounts of the Bassingbourne play, in 1511,

include a payment to "the garnement man for garnements and propyrts and playbooks." This was an occasional and not an annual play, and apparently at the beginning of the sixteenth century such plays were sufficiently frequent to render the occupation of theatrical outfitter a possible one. Certainly those lucky parishes, such as Chelmsford or St. Peter's, Oxford, which possessed a stock of costumes found a profit in letting them out to less favored places. The guilds responsible for the greater plays naturally preserved their own costumes and properties from year to year, supplementing these where necessary by loans from the neighboring gentry and clergy.

The Middle Ages were not purists about anachronism, and what was good enough for an English bishop was good enough for Annas and Caiaphas. The hands of the craftsmen who acted were discreetly cased in the gloves, without which no ceremonial occasion was complete, and sometimes, at least, vizors or masks were worn. But, as a rule, the stage setting left a good deal to the imagination. The necessaries for the play of Paradise at Beverley in 1391 consisted of the pageant car or wagon, eight hasps, eighteen staples, two vizors, a pair of wings for the angel, a fir-spar for the tree of knowledge, a worm or the serpent, two pairs of linen breeches, two pairs of shifts, and one sword. For a similar play the Norwich grocers possessed in 1565, besides the pageant and its fittings, sufficient "cotes and hosen" for the characters, that of the serpent being fitted with a tail, a "face" and hair for the Father, and hair for Adam and Eve. At Canterbury the steeds of the Magi were made of hoops and laths and painted canvas. In the Doomsday scene at Coventry the "savyd and dampnyd souls" were distinguished by their white or black color. The hell mouth was provided with fire, a windlass, and a barrel for the

earthquake. There were also three worlds to be set afire, one, it may be supposed, at each station. The stage directions to Jordan's Cornish Creation of the World are full of curious information. The Father appears in a cloud and when he speaks out of heaven, "let ye levys open." Lucifer goes down to hell "appareled fowle with fyre about hem" and the plain is filled with "every degre of devylls of lether." In Paradise a fountain and "fyne flowers" suddenly spring up, and a little later "let fyshe of dyuers sortis apeare and serten beasits." Adam and Eve departing from Paradise "shewe a spyndell and a dystaff." For the ark, timber and tools, including "a mallet, calkyn ropes, masstes, pyche and tarr," are needed.

The accounts of miracle plays frequently contain entries of payments for providing copies of the text used. When the stock of the Chelmsford play was dispersed in 1574, the copies were valued at 4*s*. Such copies were naturally of more than one kind. There was the authoritative text kept for reference by the guild or other body of presenters. This is sometimes called the playbook, or the originals which appear in a variety of quaint spellings. In the great towns where plays were given by the crafts under the general supervision of the corporation offices, each craft held the original of its own play, but approved transcripts of these were also in the hands of the corporation officers. At Chester this transcript was itself called the original; at York it was the register. The Chester texts are, however, late transcripts due to the zeal of local antiquaries, perhaps in view of some frustrated revival. Specimens exist also of two other kinds of copy. There are single plays from both Chester and York which have all the appearance of having been folded up for the pocket of a prompter. And the nature of the parts pre-

pared for individual actors may be seen from the transition example edited by Professor Skeat from a manuscript found at Shrewsbury. They contained the actor's own speeches, with the cues or closing words of the preceding speeches which signaled to him that his turn was at hand.

12. Indications of the authorship of plays are very scanty. John Bale preserved a list of his own plays, some at least of which were acted in medieval fashion. It may perhaps be assumed that Nicholas Udall, afterwards author of Ralph Roister Doister, wrote the play performed at Braintree in 1534, while he was vicar there. At Bassingbourne in 1511 one John Hobarde was paid for the playbook. In this and in several of the following cases it is impossible to determine whether an author or merely a copying scribe is in question. The corporation of Beverley employed Master Thomas Bynham, a friar preacher, to write banns for their plays in 1423. At Reading we find Mr. Laborne reforming the Resurrection play about 1533.

Miles Blomfield has been identified with a monk of Bury of that name. As he was born in 1525 he obviously was not the original author of the Digby plays, which are probably of the fifteenth century. A much greater monk of Bury, John Lydgate, has been claimed as the author of the Coventry, but there does not seem to be any real evidence of this. On the other hand I see no reason to doubt the old Chester tradition which connects the plays of that city with the name of Randulph Higden, author of the Polychronicon. The story is very fairly coherent, and the date (1328) which it assigns for the plays falls within the period of Higden's monastic life at St. Werburgh's abbey.

It must, of course, be borne in mind that the notion of authorship is only imperfectly applicable to the miracle

plays. The task of the playwrights was one less of original composition than of adaptation, of re-writing and re-arranging existing texts so as to meet the needs of the particular performances in which they were interested. Obviously this was a process that could be carried out with more or with less individuality. There were slavish adapters and there were liberal adapters. But on the whole the literary problem of the plays lies in tracing the evolution of a form rather than in appreciating individual work.

Even when written, the plays, if periodically performed, were subject to frequent revision, motived partly by the literary instinct furbishing up, partly by changing conditions, such as the existence of a varying number of craft guilds ready to undertake the responsibility for a scene. Further alterations, on theological rather than literary grounds, were naturally called for at the Reformation. Thus Jordan's Cornish Creation of the World is clearly based upon the older play printed by Mr. Norris. The book of the Norwich grocers contains two versions of their play of Paradise, the later of which "newely renvid accoordynge unto the Skrypture," was substituted for the earlier in 1565. The Towneley manuscript has two alternative versions of the Pastores. That of York has a fragmentary second version of the Coronation of the Virgin, and when read with the records affords much evidence of the dropping, insertion, and re-arrangement of scenes, and of doctrinal revision during the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER XII

SOCIAL LIFE AS PORTRAYED IN OLD ENGLISH WILLS AND HOMILIES

1. The Early English Text Society. 2. Wills as a source of information. 3. General contents of the wills. 4. A typical example of an old will. 5. A study of the titles. 6. Objects contained in the bequests. 7. Social aspect of the wills. 8. Legacies to churches and religious houses. 9. Preventive nature of the social work. 10. Contents of the old English homilies. 11. Real meaning of the word "alms." 12. Supernatural viewpoint of social work. 13. The need of a philosophy of life. 14. Bridge building as a special form of social service. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. In 1864 the Early English Text Society began the publication of a series of original documents which had long lain in the obscurity of hidden archives. Each book was edited by a specialist, and for the most part touched upon some phase of the social, economic, or religious life of the people during the two centuries prior to the so-called Reformation. *Early Alliteration Poems; Lancelot of the Laik; Political, Religious, and Love Poems; Way to Wealth; Early English Meals and Manners; English Guilds; Early English Homilies; Hymns to the Virgin and Christ* — these and similar titles indicate the contents of the hundred and more volumes which were issued by this association of learned men.

2. We have chosen one of these publications for a special study: *The Fifty Earliest English Wills* (1387–1439). Few of the old documents will give us as good a picture of the social life of the English people. A will opens to

us the secret thoughts of the testator; it reveals to us things which even his closest friend did not know; it lays bare the heart with its attachments and aversions, its love and hatred; it indicates the objects of value in one's life, and the names of those who are most cherished; it even unlocks the hidden ways of the future as a dying man views them and would wish them to be. When making a will a man is free from all undue influence and is interpreting things and persons at their true values; and so these fifty wills of bygone days are a true record of the lives which men lived.

In the Probate Court in London (1881) there were kept twenty-eight boxes of copies of old wills. They were neither classified nor catalogued, and the officials were ignorant of their dates and contents. It was in the hope of finding among this vast quantity of unpublished records something bearing the name of Shakespeare that Frederic J. Furnivall, a member of the Early English Text Society, undertook to examine the contents of the records. For four months, assisted by an officer of the Probate Court, he labored at the task, which he described as a "dusty, dirty, and tiresome job." Nothing was found that bore the name of the great dramatist. "Not one of Shakespeare's time turned up, though that of his granddaughter's surviving husband, Sir John Barnard, was found." [1] Furnivall, however, felt more than repaid for his endeavors by being able to edit fifty of the oldest wills of the collection.

3. In the preface the editor gives us some general details in regard to the contents of the wills: "It will probably disappoint the reader who looks, as I did, for inventories as parts of wills, and for long lists of traders'

[1] Dedication, p. 9.

goods, students' MSS. and the like. . . . In persons, it ranges from the Countess of Warwick, the Kingmaker's mother-in-law, to a waxchandler's servant and many a poorer man. In property, it stretches from the entail of large landed estates on sons to a portion of one bullock for a daughter, or to the gift of one sheet or a towel roller, an egg gridiron or an old brass pot to a legatee. . . . Of two things, more appears in the wills than I had expected, namely, silver plate and furred gowns. For the latter, polecats, martins, genets, wild cats, beaver, otter, and lamb were pressed into the service. Of armor there is less than I'd looked for. . . . The gifts to mend bad roads and bridges, to help poor girls to marriage, and to feed and clothe the poor, no one will quarrel with. The land wills are interesting as showing how all the land of the kingdom was in the hands of trustees, to whom every one had his land conveyed — either solely or jointly with himself — to evade the rights of forfeiture, wardship, etc., of feudal lords. These trustees are constantly prayed to do their duty to the testator and carry out his will, either by entailing his land on his sons or conveying it to such folk as his executors sell it to. Executors are likewise entreated to be faithful, as if they'd answer for their acts on the day of doom. And that this injunction was often needed in early days may be gathered from the old saying, 'Three executors make three thieves.' . . . It's pleasant to see testators anxious to make amends for all possible wrongdoing, and to watch the owners of horses bequeathing them by name; 'grey Butler, grey Manley' show that a man cared for his four-footed friends. But no dog is named in any will. Servants often are, both men and women; and in one case a nun is left money for looking after a testator in his sickness. One wife is called her husband's most trusty friend. . . . Several testators had

the good sense to order plain funerals and to recognize that pomp was a vanity that did n't help their souls." [1]

4. The following will of Nicholas Charleton, a skinner of London,[2] is chosen as typical of the collection: "In the name of God. Amen! The xviii day of the month of May, in the year of Our Lord Jesus MCCCC xxxix and the xxii year of the reign of King Henry VI, I, Nicholas Charleton, citizen and skinner of London, being in whole and good mind, am thankful to All-mighty God, and make my testament of my last will in this form that follows. First, I bequeath my soul to All-mighty God, my Maker, our Lady, Holy Mary, and to all the saints of heaven, and my body to be buried before Saint Paul's Cross. And I bequeath to the new work of the Church of Saint Paul xx*d*, and to the high altar of Saint Augustine's Church for my tithes and offering vi*s*, viii*d*. And I will and order that in all haste possible after my decease I have three Trentales of Masses[3] sung for my soul in the three houses of the Friars Preachers, the Carmelites and the Grey Friars, and I bequeath to each house x*d*. And I bequeath a thousand half-penny loaves for poor men. Also I bequeath to the brotherhood of craft of Corpus Christi vi*s*, viii*d*. and to the brotherhood of our Lady of my craft vi*s*, viii*d*. Also I bequeath to every prisoner in the prison of Ludgate and to each of two Counters[4] of London a gift of corn, to be delivered when it is of reasonable price, but within a year after my decease. I also order a hundred pounds of wax to be used during the Salve Maria of our Lady in the church of St. Augustine, that is to say two tapers a pound weight,

[1] Introduction, pp. 9-14.

[2] Number 47 of the collection, p. 112.

[3] A series of thirty masses for the dead.

[4] Prisons where people were detained for debts and small offences.

to be lighted and to burn during the 'Salve' time as long as the hundred pounds of wax last. Also I bequeath to each one of my apprentices dwelling and studying with me at the time of my death xx*d*. To Thomas Boyle, my servant, xx*d*. To Thomas Dymmoch, skinner, my best gown of the skinners' craft, if he is alive, and my second best gown to Watkin Ashwell. . . . To the brotherhood of clerks of Saint Nicholas and to the tailors of Saint John iii*s*, 4*d* each. And two thirds of the rest of my goods and chattels, after my debts be paid and the expense of my funeral, to my wife to have and to hold for evermore, and one third to my executors for masses, alms and works of charity as they think best for my soul and for the glory of God, and to each of my executors for his part in the said work one hundred *s*. To the witness of this testament I set my seal."

5. A study of the titles of the wills makes it clear how closely religion was interwoven with the social and economic phases of the time. We select four of these dedications.

(*a*) "In the name of God, Amen. On Thursday, that is to say, the fifteenth day of the month of July, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, a thousand and three hundred and four score and fifteen (1395), I, Alice West, of Hampshire, in good health and being of good mind, do make my testament in the manner which follows. In the beginning I bequeath my soul to God Almighty and to His Mother, Saint Mary, and to all the saints of Heaven, and my body to be buried in Christchurch in the Priory of the Canons, in Hampshire, near the New Forest, where my ancestors lie, etc.

(*b*) "In the name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, with the help of our Lord Jesus Christ and his Blessed Mother, the Holy Virgin, and all of the other

saints of heaven, I, John Sales, of Southwark, being of right mind and with good deliberation, make my testament in this form. In the beginning I bequeath my soul to Our Lord Jesus Christ, and to Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin, and to all the saints in heaven, and my body to be buried in the church of Saint George of Southwark, etc.

(*c*) "In the name of God, so be it, the third day of July, in the year of our Lord fourteen hundred and twenty six, I, John Creedy, squire, being of good mind, make my testament in the following manner. First I bequeath my soul to God Almighty, my Maker, to Blissful Mary, Mother of Jesus, and to all the company of heaven; my body to be buried in the Church of Saint John Zacarie, where my children are buried, etc.

(*d*) "In the name of God, so may it be; the thirteenth day of the month of March in the year of our Lord God one thousand four hundred and thirty three, I, Walter Mangeard, cook and citizen of London, make and order my present testament of my last will in this manner. First, I bequeath and recommend my soul to Almighty God, and to our Lady, Holy Mary, and to all the saints in heaven, and my body to be buried in the Church of Saint Bride, in Fleet Street, etc."

While these forms, cast in the same mould, would indicate a legal and accepted uniformity, still such a law or custom could have grown up only among a people where faith was strong, and where even the details of business life were closely interwoven with the supernatural.

6. An enumeration of some of the objects contained in the bequests will be of real interest and value to the student of social history. Here we are taken into the homes of people who lived six hundred years ago; we view the things which they valued most and wished to

be preserved by those who were dearest to them. A certain Roger Elmesley bequeaths to a godchild a feather bed, blankets, sheets, pillows, coverlets, tablecloths, towels, napkins, pewter dishes and saucers, cups, silver spoons, basins, candlesticks, a brass pan, cushions, salt-cellars, beads, gilt silver crucifix, ring with grasped hand, rack for roasting eggs, table, joint-stools, a primer to serve God with. To others he gave peacock feathers, chests, staff, towel roller, chair and sconces. Richard Dixton, Esquire, bequeathed to a church some damask cloth and a gown of goldsmith's work to be made into vestments. To different abbots he gave silver cups, to others his best horse, armor, silver cups, covered gowns of fur, gold chain and bracelets, household stuff, horses, clothing and bedding, etc. In the will of Roger Flower, Esquire, we find a curious jumble of things — towels, cups and pots, carts, plows and horses, silver plate, corn, malt, live stock, milk cows, a best ambling horse, other riding horses, clothes and gowns of fur, gold rings, beads, and a portable prayer book or breviary. Any further enumeration of the contents of the wills would be only a useless repetition. By far the greater number of the testators left homesteads and real estate. No description is given that would indicate the size or architecture of the houses or the extent of the property.

This detailed account of the objects of value in a family gives us a real insight into the spirit of the old English home. In the first place, the house and the adjoining property or farm pass from father to son for many generations. What a contrast to the spirit of our own times! How few of the homes of the rich or the poor in our day remain in the family! Throughout the land are to be found great estates and costly buildings turned over to private hospitals or other philanthropic associations.

Nothing would better indicate to us the social condition of England six hundred years ago than the fact that the home remained in the possession of the family for succeeding generations. Then, too, there were so many objects which were cherished heirlooms. We are surprised at the amount of silverware and the rich objects of clothing, such as gowns of fur and the regalia of the guild members. We are not surprised to find many of these objects last for generations, for they were made by members of the craft guilds, and that meant that there was nothing shoddy or cheap in their making.

7. The social aspect of these wills must be apparent to anyone who makes a careful study of their contents. Who were the legatees, and for what purposes were the bequests intended? Two of the wills are incomplete; one names the wife as the sole recipient, and one disinherits his wife. Of the forty-six remaining wills thirty-eight contain legacies of a decided social nature. The construction and repairing of roads and bridges are specified in ten wills. Numerous hospitals receive bounties, and faithful servants are generously rewarded. There are donations for the lame and blind, and lepers are frequently remembered. Prisoners, too, are so often mentioned that their sad fate must have made a special appeal to the more fortunate people. Besides those detained in jails for some crime, there were many who were imprisoned for inability to meet the obligations of debt. This abuse of casting debtors into prison came down to our own time, and was characteristically exposed and denounced by Dickens in *Little Dorrit*. Many of the wills specified that the money for prisoners was to be used for the release of those who were detained for debts. In a third of the bequests the poor are mentioned. Sometimes money is given to be distributed among the needy

of a certain parish; at other times it is to be spent for the purchase of corn, bread, or ale. Numbers of guilds certainly felt the obligation towards apprentices who were working under their direction, for several legacies are left to apprentices in case the master craftsman died before the course of instruction had been finished. Poor tenants and especially deserving tenants are not forgotten by those for whom they worked. In one instance the poorest tenant is mentioned. The provision of dowries for poor maidens was a noteworthy social duty. Guild members held their associations in loving memory and bestowed bountiful benefits upon them, these bequests frequently taking the form of rich regalia to be used on festive occasions.

8. The editor of the book which we are quoting protests against the number of legacies to churches and religious houses. We will not pause here to argue the supernatural character or purpose of these donations. We live at a period when money is given largely to philanthropic foundations. We have no quarrel with the donors, but their bequests indicate the change of attitude in the minds of men, and point to the fact that religious motives less frequently influence testators to consider the spiritual element in benefactions. Omitting, then, the religious phase of the wills, let us regard them purely from a social point of view. Let us grant that practically all the wills contain bequests to churches or religious organizations. It must be remembered that there were schools in connection with the churches, and that all the social activities of the people were gathered around the church houses. It must be remembered that the members of the religious orders took care of the poor, conducted inns for travelers, gave the only help that was accorded to prisoners, and in fact performed the various social duties that in our more

complex times are distributed among various social organizations. The religious communities were the Red Cross workers of the centuries past. What was given to them was not considered as a personal favor. They were but the trustees of the accumulated wealth of others. Any bequest to them brought no luxury to the individual members of the community. When in this light we regard the benefactions to the various church organizations, we must conclude that the donations enumerated in the wills had a real social value.

9. We must not overlook the preventive nature of much of the social work of the time. At present our Federal Government is frequently called upon to assist farmers to meet their obligations; for bills are due and crops have not yet matured. If aid is not given, the mortgaged farms must go. The Government considers it good business to prevent such catastrophes when danger threatens the agricultural districts of the country. We find an equivalent to this work in the many benefactions accorded to tenants, who, no doubt, often faced the same problems which the present-day farmer meets. At that time there did not exist the national machinery for such work, but the testators individually came to the rescue of those who had financial difficulties. Again, in the legacies for apprentices we find decided preventive methods. Henry Ford has been singled out for the care which he has taken of the individual worker, and the insistence that a certain part of the man's salary go to building or maintaining a home; but our modern philanthropist does not claim to give the workmen the skill and training of the old craftsmen. Even when owning his own home the employee often finds himself destitute. Accordingly, in providing for the training of an apprentice, the old-time testator, himself a master craftsman, gave

the best that could be given; he was the ideal worker in preventive methods. When we recall, too, that the guilds provided much of the enjoyment and recreation for the civil and religious celebrations, and that whole communities were actively engaged in mystery plays and pageants, it must be evident that donations to the craftsmen were of a decidedly social and preventive nature. The times did not call for much of the preventive work of our day. No doubt, if medical science had been more perfect, we should find the application of preventive medicine, but outdoor life and fresh air did much to counteract such evils as at present menace the health of our communities.

10. In preparing the second part of this chapter we have carefully studied fifty-two old English homilies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Neither the names of the writers nor the exact dates of the compositions can be ascertained; but these omissions in no way affect the value of the documents as evidences of social life. Before considering the social value of these sermons we shall briefly dwell upon the subject matter as pertaining strictly to religion. The contents of the fifty-two sermons can be summed up in these few words: "Keep the Ten Commandments; keep the Commandments and be rewarded in heaven, or break them and be punished in hell." Pilgrimages, shrines, indulgences, and devotion to the angels and saints are briefly mentioned and in only a few instances; and while the devotion to the Blessed Virgin is clearly explained, reference to her occurs but seldom. Sinlessness of life and the love of God are set forth as the aims of Christian endeavor; and confession of sins and the reception of Holy Communion are the principal channels of grace. The preachers show a remarkable knowledge of Holy Scripture and equally remarkable aptitude in interweaving appropriate texts. In all, one cannot

peruse the homilies without a conviction that the people of England in the above-mentioned centuries were well instructed in the essentials of their religion.[1]

11. Throughout these sermons the people are reminded of their social duties. It will be noticed from the extracts quoted below that the word "alms" had a very broad meaning and embraced every form of activity which at present we group under the term "social service." Such work was not done with a view to human praise, but solely from a supernatural motive. The motives for the exercise of social duties were far more elevating in those centuries than they are at present, when the false teaching of evolution has lowered the estimate of man's dignity, has reduced the work for the indigent to a level little above that of the care which is bestowed upon a sick or wounded animal, and has set before the social worker the task of saving individuals, not for the sake of the sufferers, but to decrease the cost of public expense, or to safeguard society from those who would otherwise become dangerous to the state. We do not condemn these motives; but they fall far below those which influenced the age which we are seeking to describe.

"He who gives alms for his Lord's love hides his treasure in heaven, where no thief may steal away (his) treasures, but where they shall be hundredfold preserved for him. In many ways may a man do alms — in meat and drink,

[1] *Old English Homilies and Homilitic Treatise, of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.* Edited from MSS. in the British Museum, Lambeth and Bodleian Libraries, with introduction, translation, and notes by Rev. R. Morris, LL.D. Published for the Early English Text Society, by N. Trubner & Co., London. 1868.

Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century. Edited with introduction, translation, and notes by the Rev. R. Morris, LL.D. Second series. Published for the Early English Text Society, by N. Trubner & Co., London. 1873.

and also in clothing; and by receiving strangers, and visiting sick men, and comforting the sorrowful, or by leading a blind man, or supporting the infirm, or healing the sick, if he know aught of leechcraft (the healing art); or if he forgiveth those who have offended him; or if (he succor) the distressed; or if he carry (a dead) man to the tomb. All this is alms; and also that a man chastise the frail body, for correction, which must be corrected; for that is mercy that the wise man with reproof rectify the unwise. Lay never up in thine hoard what may be of service to destitute men, for thou thyself enjoyest not thy weal, though thou keep it secretly (hoarded up). Thou gatherest more and more, and men die of hunger, and thy wealth rots before thine eyes. Let us not do so, but let us do as our Lord hath commanded us." [1]

12. "The prayer of a sinful man God Almighty will not hear, except he forsake his sins and repent. Dear men, though ye sin and repent, trust nôt wholly to your fasts if ye are able to do other good deeds. There is no man but what can do something more than fast. . . . The second is to give as much alms as you can afford — masses for all Christian souls; to poor men, shoes, clothes, meat, drink, warmth and lodging; to visit the sick, to help to bury the dead, and to assist them (the poor) with whatever thou art able." [2]

"Many kinds of good deeds are there; but the Apostle exhorts us to one of them, that is, almsdeed, and saith that we ought to give alms to destitute men, but, as the holy Psalmist David said, distribute it so that every needy man that craves it may receive something thereof. Give what behoveth thee; bestow it, and do not sell them the alms, but give. . . . In four kinds of ways man

[1] *Homilies*, p. 108. [2] *Ib.*, p. 36.

selleth his alms. One is when he begetteth praise therewith. And this vice hath mostly all men who give their alms for both love (sake) of recompense and also for to have praise, and to be honored far and near where they are known. In the second mode man selleth his alms when he giveth it to such men whom for shame he cannot refuse, because neighbors or else friends, and therewith rids him of shame which he should have if he gave it not. In the third mode he selleth his alms when he gives it to such a man who doth for him, or hath done or shall do good service, and thinketh with his alms to requite him his trouble. Then is this man's services bought with alms. In the fourth mode a man selleth his alms when he giveth it to such men as he ought rightly to help, for sustenance, for clothing, according to his behoof, as doth many a man who giveth his alms to father or mother, brother or sister, or others so akin that he may not rightly withhold it. . . .

"Verily I say unto you that those who do good for to have thereof again in this life shall have no reward in the everlasting world; but all that a man does specially for God's love he shall receive the reward thereof, and be then rewarded even as it shall now be merited here; for Our Lord saith in the holy gospel, according to the same measure that ye mete now, your good deeds shall afterwards be meted to your need (advantage) and a hundredfold more." [1]

"Joyfully will the man go to shrift (confession) and tell the priest that he hath bereaved and stolen, and joyfully he will hear (the penance) the priest layeth upon him. But when the priest bids him give back the goods to the man that formerly owned it, no longer will he hear it willingly, but he will say with crafty and smooth words,

[1] *Ib.*, p. 134.

'I have naught thereof; I have spent it all.' Thus then saith the priest in reply, 'Good man, take thou now of thine own goods and give instead.' It may happen that he will reply, 'Though I had all that I ever obtained I could not make compensation for the harm I have done.' By Christ! He must restore as much as he is able, for many a man would be willing to forgive him half or a third part when he sees that he is able to produce no more. It may happen he will say to the priest, 'Sir, I know not now where are the men whom I have wronged. Some are dead, and others have removed; so that I cannot come across them.' . . . And if he knows not for certain that they are alive, neither the man nor the priest, let him come to the church (of the district) where he took the goods and follow the advice of the priest whom he findeth there. The priest will bid him that he take that property or its value and distribute it among the poor men, or (expend) it on bridges or on church work, or in some place where it shall be well employed for Christ's love, and for the man that formerly owned it." [2]

13. These are but a few of the many extracts which could be garnered from the old homilies in reference to the obligation of social service in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and to multiply quotations would be only useless repetition. We find here a resumé of the teaching of the Middle Ages in regard to the duties of those who possessed wealth. They were but the trustees of God; their riches were not their own to be disposed of according to their whims, but upon them was laid the solemn injunction of assisting those in need. It will be noticed, too, that religion here had a practical bearing on the lives of the people and manifested itself in deed and amendment of life and in the obligation of restoring

[2] *Ib.*, p. 30.

all ill-gotten goods. Finally there is set forth a simple and clear philosophy of life. There can be no intelligent social work without such a philosophy as a background. Any one who acts even in the most deserving cause and has not a reason for his action is only a cog in a machine. No philosophy has as yet been invented which is worthy to supplant the motives of the Christian religion. Christian social service may not be perfect in its application, and at times may learn much from others; but its motives stand out in shining contrast to those of all other systems, and where these Christian motives are forgotten social action invariably sinks to a low level.

14. In both the wills and the homilies mention is often made of bridge building. We owe it to the encouragement of the Church that this form of social and economic work made considerable progress during the Middle Ages. Travel and communication were essential to the spiritual lives of the people; and hence the Church did not hesitate to bestow rich indulgences upon the faithful who contributed money or material for roads and bridges, as she did for those who built churches and hospitals. In our day Mr. Carnegie, millionaire founder of numerous libraries, insisted that his name be carved over the entrance of each building. Shall we be critical of an earlier age when men and women were satisfied with a supernatural reward for their social endeavors? It would require pages to set down the names and localities of bridges which were constructed with little cost to the communities and with only a supernatural reward for the laborers and the benefactors.

In England, especially, the construction of bridges and the making of roads were ranked among the works of mercy. Personal service was accepted from those who were unable to contribute money; and many poor per-

sons, by hauling stones and leveling the approaches to bridges, became benefactors to the community and were satisfied with the spiritual benefactions of the Church as their only reward. In France there were associations of "Bridge Brothers," pious associations whose members for the most part took no vows, and were distinct from the religious orders of the Church. The members devoted their lives to the building and care of bridges and to the protection of pilgrims and travelers along the public highways. Of such importance was this work that collections were taken up in England for the bridges of France, thereby showing the international character which this movement had assumed. Notable for this work was St. Benezet (Benedict), who in 1177 began the construction of the famous bridge over the Rhone at Avignon; and so well did he and his followers build that some of the arches of the old bridge bear the burden of modern traffic. Most of the bridges built over the Rhone and its rapid tributaries owe their existence to the money given for indulgences. The records of the early bridges of Spain are few, but in Italy and Germany we find that most of the bridges were built through the encouragement of local church officials or of the indulgences of bishops and the Holy See.[1]

"Ancient histories tell us that it was often monks and priests who built the bridges, or how they exhorted the rich to this good work. St. Dunstan's Penitential mentions road mending and bridge building among the good works incumbent on the rich. Leland, in his Itinerary, tells us of many bridges built out of piety. Here is an instance: 'The bridge at Bedford-upon-Turege is a very notable work, and hath twenty-four arches of stone. A

[1] *Indulgences as a Social Factor in the Middle Ages*, by J. Elliot Ross, pp. 67-104.

poor priest began this bridge, and, as it is said, he was animated so to do by a vision. Then all the country about set their hands unto the performing of it, and since lands hath been given to the maintenance of it. There standeth a fair chapel of Our Lady Trans Pontem at the very end of it, and there is a fraternity in the town for the preservation of this bridge, and one waiteth continually to keep the bridge clean.

"Sir Richard Hoare, in his History of Wiltshire, gives a detailed account of the bridge and chapel built over the Avon at Salisbury. Mass was said at dawn every morning. To this chapel a hospital for old people was attached. ('The mastership before the Reformation was as profitable as it is honorable, from the vast sums they had daily given for oblations, obventions, etc., in the chapel, wherewith divers lands were purchased.') This source of revenue, by which bridges were built and repaired and hospitals maintained, was of course entirely cut off by the Reformation, when, as we know, they went to such a pitch of impiety and madness as to take the very altarstones and put them in the bridges, to be trodden under the feet of men and cattle. After this, barriers had to be substituted on our bridges in the place of open chapels, and forced tolls instead of voluntary offerings." [1]

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Why do wills indicate the social mind of the people?
2. Do wills give us a clue to the home life of a nation?
3. Do the oaths required in civil courts prove that our civilization is built on Christian ideals?
4. What may be learned from the titles of the old English wills?
5. What conclusions in regard to the English family may be drawn from a close study of the articles enumerated in paragraph six?

[1] *Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 26.

6. Why were legacies to churches and religious houses regarded as a fulfillment of one's social duties?

7. Show that there was an element of preventive methods in the old bequests.

8. Why were donations to craft guilds of social value?

9. How is it that homilies and sermons can contain material for social investigation?

10. Mention several of the meanings attached to the word "alms."

11. What was the meaning of the term "selling alms"?

12. Point out the social value of the requirement to restore ill-gotten goods.

13. Discuss the social value of the Ten Commandments.

14. Explain what you mean by a philosophy of life. Do all social workers need a philosophy of life?

15. Have we a more perfect philosophy of life than the people of the thirteenth century?

16. Which is more helpful in social work, a social philsophy or an accurate method?

17. What was the social value of bridges?

18. Was this value more economic than social?

19. What was the connection between bridge building and the holding of fairs?

CHAPTER XIII

A PORTRAYAL OF SOCIAL LIFE IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

"Piers Plowman" and "Reynard the Fox"

1. *Piers Plowman.* 2. The author's use of Bible texts. 3. Social evils of the time. 4. Place and personages of the vision. 5. Explanation of the vision. 6. Allegory of the vices. 7. The evils of Bribery and Falsehood. 8. Punishment of the vices. 9. The search after Truth. 10. Obligation of labor and punishment of idlers. 11. The teaching of Scripture on the obligation of work. 12. The poor should be helped. 13. The rewards of social duties. 14. Search for Do-well, Do-Better, and Do-Best. 15. Lessons from the poem. 16. *Reynard the Fox.* 17. An account of the story. 18. Conclusion. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. A recent classical work, *The Cambridge History of English Literature*,[1] devotes forty-eight pages to a critique of *Piers Plowman.* No other book of the period, not even Chaucer's, receives so adequate a treatment. "The *Plowman* has been quoted by every historian of the fourteenth century as the most vivid and trustworthy source for the social and economic history of the times." [2] The author of this poem was William Langland, the real title of the book being *The Vision of William Concerning Piers Plowman.* Exact scholarship has proved that the original was twice lengthened by the author, the last addition being *The Life of Do-Well, Do-Better, and Do-Best.* The shorter poem was written in 1362 and enlarged in 1390 and

[1] Ward and Waller, 18 volumes. See vol. II, pp. 1 to 48.
[2] *Id.*, vol. II, p. 1.

1398. The additions of later authors considerably confused the original work.

2. The writer's knowledge of both the Old and the New Testament is really astonishing, and throughout the poem the requirement of good works is set forth in Scriptural texts. While some of his doctrines would not meet with the approbation of the Church, that of the necessity of charity or helping one's neighbor is insisted on. Those reformers of the sixteenth century who claimed William Langland as a predecessor must have had considerable difficulty in saving the reputation of Luther and in explaining away *Piers Plowman's* contention that faith without good works is dead. A superficial reading of the poem is apt to deceive and even shock those who have not studied the commentaries on the text. For instance, several references are to the clergyman (Learning) and his wife. But the word "wife" here means the Bible; which would only go to show that the Church expected the priest to devote as much time and love to the sacred book as the married man did to his wife.

3. From 1347 to 1350 the terrible plague known as the Black Death devastated Europe, carrying off about a fourth of the inhabitants, and was followed by minor epidemics for thirty years. Many of the monasteries where the poor had been cared for were no longer able to feed the crowds at the gates, and were censured by thoughtless critics. It is necessary to keep in mind the condition of the times in order to understand some of the pessimism which runs through *Piers Plowman*, which was written at this period of great poverty and suffering in England. The age had, no doubt, its moral, social, and economic problems and evils; and no one would venture to defend all the officials, lawyers, ecclesiastics, friars, and monasteries of the time. While the author

severely criticizes some of those who are high in the Church, and some of the friars, for their want of observance of religious obligations, he has the highest respect for the Church and for the religious life. Attention has been called to the severity with which the poem ridicules the members of the legal profession. But while the *Plowman* is to some extent a satire, it holds up a picture of the social condition of the people. Above all it insists on the social duties of life and regards religion as void which is not manifested in good works. But its teaching is not more severe on this point than was the doctrine of Christ.

4. "One summer season, clothed as a hermit, I went abroad in the world to hear wonders. On Malvern hills a strange thing befel me. Being tired of wandering, I rested me by a bourne's side, where I soon fell asleep. Then dreamt I a wondrous dream, that I was in a strange wilderness, and saw on the east side of it a tower on a toft, and beneath it a deep dale with a dungeon. There was also a fair field, full of all manner of folk. Some of them ploughed, sowed, and worked hard; but some were clad in gay apparel. Others prayed, and led an austere life, like anchorites. Some chose merchandise, whilst some were minstrels. Some were jesters and slanderers, against whom St. Paul preaches. There were beggars, too, dissembling knaves, who lived in gluttony, sleep, and sloth. Pilgrims and palmers were there, who went to Rome, and had leave to lie ever after. Hermits, too, went to Walsingham, great long lubbers were they, and loath to work. I found friars there, of all four orders, glozing the Gospel, covetous cheats, whose traffic had much to do with money. For since charity has taken to trading, many strange things have happened. There preached a pardoner, and shewed a bull, saying he could

assoil every one. Men came and kissed it; and he blinded their eyes with it, and got rings and brooches. Were the bishop worth his ears, this would not be suffered. Parish priests complain that their parishes are poor now since the pestilence, and so they go to London. There were a hundred sergeants in silk hoods, law-pleaders, who never spoke till they saw their money. I saw there bishops who became clerks of account, and archdeacons who left the feeding of the poor to be clerks of the king's bench. I saw too barons, burgesses, bondmen, bakers, butchers, brewsters, and others; and ditchers who led ill lives, and sing idle songs. Cooks were crying 'hot pies,' and taverners were praising their wine.

5. "I now tell the meaning of the mountain, the dale, and the field. A lovely lady came down from that cliff, and bade me look at the people, most of whom seek only worship in this world (here imaged by a field). I was afraid, and asked what it all meant. 'In the tower,' she said, 'is Truth, that is, God the Creator, who gives men wool and linen sufficient. Three things are really needful — clothes, meat, and drink. But beware of drink, and remember Lot's sin, which was caused by drunkenness. Moderation is wholesome, though the appetite be keen. Believe not thy body, which is leagued with the fiend; therefore beware.' I thanked her, and asked her to whom the treasures of the world belonged. She bade me go to the Gospel and read how Christ was tempted by being shown a penny. 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's.' [1] Reason and common sense should rule you. Then I asked her what the deep dale meant. 'That is the castle of care,' she said, 'the abode of Satan, who deceived Adam and Eve, and Cain, and

[1] Mat. xxii, 21.

Judas. He hinders love, and deceives all that trust in vain treasure.' Then I wondered who she was, and conjured her to tell me her name. 'I am Holy Church, who received thee in infancy; thou broughtest me then pledges to work my will.' Then I prayed her to teach me Christ's will, for I wished for no treasure but my soul's salvation. 'Truth is the best of treasures; whoever is true in word and work is like Our Lord. My mother and my brethren are they who hear the word of God and do it.'[1] Kings and knights should govern rightfully, and bind transgressors. For David dubbed knights to serve Truth; and to do so is far better than to fast on Fridays. And Christ, too, knighted Cherubim and Seraphim, and taught them Truth and Obedience. Lucifer was most lovely till he brake obedience; and then he and his fellows became fiends. Lucifer, for his exceeding pride, lies lowest in hell; with him all wrongdoers shall dwell. But they that do after the word may be sure of heaven; and therefore say I that Truth is the best treasure.

6. " 'But I have no natural knowledge of it,' said I. 'Thou fool,' said she, 'it is thy natural conscience, teaching you to love God and leave deadly sin. If any can teach you better, let him! For Love is what God likes best, and eke the plant of Peace. Say this in thy songs, when men ask thee to sing. Love began with God the Father, who let His Son die for us; even as Christ prayed for His enemies, granting mercy to them that pierced His heart. Therefore I advise the rich to have pity on the poor; for with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. For though ye be true in word and deed, except ye love the poor, and give alms, ye have no merit in your prayers. St. James tells us that

[1] Luke viii, 21.

faith without works is dead; so chastity without charity is but an unlighted lamp. Many chaplains are chaste, but have not charity; they eat up what they should give away, and ask for more. Curators that should be chaste are encumbered with avarice. This treachery teaches the laity to put off giving away. See what is in the Gospel: 'Give and it shall be given to you.' Love comforts the sad. Love is the readiest way to heaven; and Truth is the best of all treasures. . . .

7. "Then I prayed her to teach me how to know Falsehood. She bade me turn and see him. I looked, and, first of all, beheld a woman very richly clothed, decked with a crown and costly rings. 'Who is this?' I asked. 'That is Meed (Bribery),' she said, 'who has done me much evil. Her father was Wrong. Tomorrow shall Meed be married to Falsehood, by help of Flattery and Guile. Tomorrow you may see the whole crew of them; but beware of them, lest thou fail of bliss. I now commend thee to God.' Afterwards I beheld the bridal pair. Sir Simony was sent for to seal the charters. But there was not house-room for all. So a pavilion was pitched, and ten thousand tents, for knights, sellers, and buyers. All came to see the marriage. Then Flattery led Meed to Falsehood, promising that she will obey his will. Simony and Civil unfold the deed: 'Know all men that I, Flattery, pledge Falsehood to Meed, and grant them the earldom of Envy, the kingdom of Avarice and the Isle of Usury, to have and to hold all their lives, they yielding their souls to Satan at a year's end.' The witnesses were Wrong, Piers the Pardoner, Pauline's Doctor, Bette the Beadle, and many others. The deed was then sealed and signed. But Theology was wroth, and said to Civil: 'Wo betide thee! Ye well know Falsehood is a traitor and Beelzebub's bastard son. Then

take Meed to London, and see if the law will permit this. If Conscience find this out, it will go hard with you at the last.' Then Flattery fetched out florins, and bade Guile give it to the notaries. Great were the thanks for these bribes. Meed consents to go to London. Then were Falsehood and Flattery glad, and bade all be ready to go to Westminster. Meed was set on a sheriff's back, and Falsehood on an assizer's; Flattery rides upon Fair-speech; but Simony and Civil had to go on foot. Summoners are to be saddled, and provisors and deans to be used as horses. 'Pauline's people shall serve myself,' said Civil. Yoke our commissary, and make of Liar a long cart.

8. "Thus all fare forth together. Guile led the way; but soon Soothness spurred on, and went and told Conscience. 'If I could but catch Falsehood or Flattery,' said the King, 'I would hang them both. Command the constable to attach them, fetter Falsehood, and cut off Guile's head. Simony and Civil I warn; and let not Liar escape.' Dread was at the door, and heard the doom, and bade Falsehood flee. Then fled Falsehood and Guile; but tradesmen prayed Guile to keep their shops for them. Liar leapt away through by-lanes, being nowhere welcome. But Pardoners took him in, washed him, clothed him, and sent him to church with pardons. Then Leeches begged him to dwell with them; and Spicers asked him to be shopkeeper. Minstrels entertained him half a year; but Friars fetched him thence, and clothed him as a Friar. Thus all fled into corners for fear and only Meed durst stay; and even she wept when taken prisoner."

9. The above pages are from Skeat's synopsis of the first and the second part of the poem.[1] Then follows the

[1] *The Vision of William the Plowman*, by William Langland. Edited by Rev. Walter W. Skeat, M.A. N. Trubner & Co., London. 1867.

disgrace of Bribery, who refuses to listen to either Conscience or Reason. Conscience preaches to the people, warns them against the seven deadly sins, and converts them from their evil ways. Under the guidance of the Plowman the different classes set forth to seek for Truth. Piers lays down as one of the conditions of his leadership that all are to work, and vividly recounts the wiles and punishments of those who would seek to escape from toil. Truth, for whom all are seeking, is God the Father, who is every ready to pardon repentant sinners.

10. "Piers and the pilgrims set about ploughing, and many workmen help them. At high prime Piers looked at what the workmen had done. But some helped him only by drinking and singing, till Piers threatened them with famine. Then the shirkers feigned to be blind or lame, and said all they could do was to pray for him, since they could not work. 'I shall soon find out if what you say is true,' said Piers. 'Truth shall teach you to drive his team, to sow, and to scare crows; but those who are really blind I will help. Anchorites and hermits I will feed, but only once a day, for once is enough.' Then the wasters began to resist, and one of them threatened Piers, who prayed the knight to keep his promise. The knight sternly warns them. But one of them cared nothing for Piers or the knight, and threatened them. Piers swears he will punish them yet, and calls in Hunger. Hunger caught Waster, and wrung and buffeted him so, that Piers had to interfere and beat Hunger off. Then the shirkers flew to the barns to thresh; hermits seized spades and dug. The blind, bedridden, and lame received assistance. Lame men asked to keep Piers's beasts, for which he gave them meat. Then had Piers pity, yet fears they will do ill when Hunger departs, though they are meek enough now. So he asks Hunger

to give him advice. Hunger tells him to feed the able-bodied beggars with horse's bread and beans, and to make them work. Men who have been unfortunate should be comforted. The needy and naked should be helped with meat and money. Piers wants to know if it is right to make men work. 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.' "[1]

11. "Because of the cold the sluggard would not plough; he shall beg therefore in the summer, and it shall not be given him."[2]

"Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it him that hath ten talents."[3]

"For to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; but from him that hath not, that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away."[4]

"Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow."[5]

"Take the pound away from him, and give it to him that hath ten pounds."

"But I say to you, that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him."[6]

12. "Common sense tells men to work. 'For thou shalt eat the labors of thy hands; blessed art thou, and it shall be well with thee."[7] Piers complains that some of his men are always ill. Hunger says it comes from

[1] Gen. iii, 19. [2] Prov. xx, 4. [3] Mat. xxv, 28.
[4] Luke xix, 22 and 24. [5] Mat. xxv, 29.
[6] Luke xix, 26. [7] Ps. cxxvii, 2.

their overeating. They should not eat till they are hungry. They should not let Sir Surfeit sit beside them. Were men thus moderate, Physic would sell his cloak and turn farm laborer. Piers thanks Hunger for such advice. Hunger says he must dine ere he goes away. Piers says he has no geese or pigs, only cheese, curds, cream, an oatcake, and a loaf of beans and bran, also leeks, parsley, and cabbages, which must last out till harvest. The poor people brought peascods, beans, and cherries to feed Hunger. Hunger wanted more, and they brought peas and leeks, to keep him away till harvest. But in harvest time they fed Hunger plentifully, and beggars would eat only the finest bread. Laborers were dainty, and wanted fresh flesh and fried fish, and grumbled about wages, except when hungry. A warning to workmen, and a prophecy of famine.

13. "Truth bids Piers labor before the famine comes, and promises pardon to all who help him to work. Just kings and knights pass lightly through purgatory. Bishops who observe the commandments, and preach to their parsons the peril of sin, sit with the Apostles at doomsday. Merchants have not plenary pardon, because they keep not holidays and swear. Truth bade them trade fairly and build hospitals, repair broken bridges, and dower maidens, and assist widows and poor scholars. Then they would reach heaven. . . . But the old and feeble, women with child, blind and maimed, that are meek, have their purgatory on earth. . . . The Pope, I fully believe, can grant pardon. But to trust to Triennials is very unsafe. Ye mayors, and wealthy judges, who purchase pardons, when ye stand before Christ at doomsday, and your deeds are rehearsed, though you had a sackful of provincial letters, I will give little for your pardon unless Do-well help you! God

give us grace to work such works, that Do-well at doomsday will say we did God's will."[1]

14. Thus runs the poem of *Piers Plowman*, but the author adds another part in which in a dream he goes in search of Do-well, Do-better and Do-best:

"Murmur not against God, but be content. As the sweet red rose grows on a rough briar, or wheat grows from a weed, so Do-well, Do-bet, and Do-best spring out of the lowly. They that keep wedlock please God. Of such come confessors, martyrs, monks. . . . So I went on till I met Clergy and his wife, who received me gladly. Clergy asked after Wit and Study. And I said they had sent me to learn about Do-well, Do-bet, and Do-best. 'Do-well,' he said, 'is an active life, such as that of husbandmen, tailors, cobblers. Do-bet is, to feed and clothe beggars, to comfort those in prison, and the sick; and to live in unity with all. Do-best is to teach the people by preaching.' "

Thus ends the story *Piers Plowman*.

15. Evils there were in those far-off days, and no one should wish to paint the picture brighter than it really was. There were ignorance and superstition. If Piers finds fault with pilgrimages and indulgences, he also condemns astronomy and geometry. Terrible plagues devastated the land in the time of the writer, but William Langland never lost faith in God or in the Church. He was among those who had hopes and visions of loftier things. He had the highest respect for the religious life as such, and for those nuns and friars who were true to their life of prayer and good works. Like Erasmus and St. Thomas More, he was grieved by the abuses which he saw around him; but, if we can judge his character from his works, he would have denounced the religious

[1] Skeat's synopsis.

innovators of the sixteenth century, and like St. Thomas More would have gone to the scaffold rather than sacrifice principle or in any way prove false to the Church of Rome.

16. Not only *Piers Plowman*, but the stories and romances of the Middle Ages give us an insight into the lives and character of the people. One of the most popular tales, *Reynard the Fox*, was written in the middle of the twelfth century and translated into many European languages. The whole spirit of this narrative reveals the minds of the people and the practice of religion. As usual the fox is the villain of the story. He lies, cheats, steals, and kills, and outwits all the beasts of the forest. We can well understand how popular the story must have been, and the wonder is that it has not found readers in our day. But the point which we wish to emphasize here is the use that the author makes, even in an allegory, of religion and the religious spirit of the times. Such a story could have been written only for a people whose religion was intimately bound up with their civic, social, and workaday lives.

17. The lion, the king of the beasts, calls all to a council. Only Reynard absents himself; and well he does, for he has many an evil deed marked against him. One after another the beasts complain of the fox; and even the bear, who should have been strong enough to defend himself, narrates the most pitiful story about the treatment which he has received from the fox. As would be expected, the rabbit and Chanticleer have doleful accounts of the ferocious fox who has not spared the members of their families. Then begins the trial of Reynard, and the story, while it amuses, teaches many a religious truth and inculcates the practice of Christian duties. Grimbard, the badger, the cousin and friend of the fox, pleads in his favor and assures all present that Reynard has not

tasted flesh for a year, that he eats only one meal a day, and that "he is doing infinite penance for his sins, so that he is become pale and lean with praying and fasting, for he would fain be with God." But unfortunately for both the badger and the fox, Chanticleer appears upon the scene.

"Thus while Grimbard stood preaching, they perceived, coming down the hill toward them, stout Chanticleer the cock, who brought upon a bier a dead hen whose head Reynard had bitten clean off, and it was brought before the king to take cognizance thereof. Chanticleer, marching foremost, hung his wings and smote his feathers piteously, whilst on the other side the bier went two of his fairest hens, the fairest between Holland and Arden. Each of them bore a straight bright burning taper, for they were sisters to Coppel that lay dead upon the bier; and as they marched they cried, 'Alack, alack! and well-a-day! for the death of Coppel, our sister dear.' Two young pullets bore the bier, and cackled so heavily and wept so loud for the death of Coppel, their mother, that the very hills echoed to their clamor. On reaching the presence of the king, Chanticleer, kneeling down, spake as follows:

"Most merciful, dread lord, the king, vouchsafe, I do beseech you, to hear and redress the injuries which the fox Reynard hath done me and my children, whom you here behold weeping, as well they may. For it was in the beginning of April, when the weather was fair, I being then in the height of my pride and plumage, sprung from great stock and lineage, with eight valiant sons and seven fair daughters by my side, all of whom my wife had brought me at a single hatch, all of whom were strong and fat, strutting in a yard well fenced round about. Here they had several sheds, beside six stout mastiff dogs

for their guard, which had torn the skins of many wild beasts; so that my children felt secure from any evil that might happen to those more exposed to the snares of the world; but Reynard, that false and dissembling traitor, envying their happy fortune, many times assailed the walls in such desperate manner that the dogs were obliged to be loosed, and they hunted him away. Once, indeed, they overtook and bit him, making him pay the price of his theft, as his torn skin bore witness. Nevertheless he escaped; the more the pity.

"But we lived more quietly some time after; until at last he came in the likeness of a hermit, and brought me a letter to read. It was sealed with your majesty's royal seal; and in it I found written that you had proclaimed peace throughout all your realm, and that no manner of beast or fowl were longer to injure one another. Reynard affirmed that for his own part he was become a monk, a cloistered recluse, and had vowed to perform daily penance for his sins. He next showed me and counted his beads. He had his books and wore a hair shirt next to his skin, while in a very humble tone he said, 'You see, Sir Chanticleer, you have never need to be afraid of me henceforward, for I have vowed nevermore to eat flesh. I am now waxed old, and would only remember my soul. I have yet my noon and my evening prayers to say; I must therefore take my leave.'

"He departed, singing his credo as he went, and I saw him lie down under a hawthorn. These tidings made me exceedingly glad; I took no further heed, but clucking my family together, I went to ramble outside the wall, a step I shall forever rue. For that same devout Reynard, lying under the bush, came creeping between us and the gate; then suddenly surprised one of my children, which he thrust into his maw, and to my great

sorrow bore away. For having tasted the sweetness of our flesh, neither hunter nor hound can protect us from him. Night and day he continues to watch us with such hungry assiduity that out of fifteen children he hath now left me only four unslain. Yesterday my daughter Coppel, here lying dead upon her bier, her body being rescued by the arrival of a pack of hounds — too late, alas — hath fallen, after her mother, a victim to his arts. This is my just complaint, which I refer to your highness's mercy to have compassion upon, and upon my many slaughtered children.'

"Then spake the king: 'Sir Grimbard, hear you this of your uncle, the recluse? He seems to have feasted and prayed with a vengeance; but if I live another year he shall dearly abide it. For you, Chanticleer, your complaint is heard, and shall be repaired. We will bestow handsome obsequies upon your daughter dead, laying her in the earth with solemn dirge and worship due. This done, we will consult with our lords how to do you right and bring the murderer to justice.'

"Then began the Placebo Domino, with all the verses belonging to it, too many to recite. The dirge being done, the body was interred, and over it was placed a fair marble stone, polished as bright as glass, upon which was inscribed the following epitaph in large letters: 'Coppel, Chanticleer's daughter, whom Reynard the fox has slain, lieth here interred. Mourn, reader, mourn! for her death was violent and lamentable.'

"During this trial, while the beasts are complaining of poor Reynard and his cousin Grimbard is pleading in vain for him, a decision is reached to bring the fox to court to answer for his many iniquities. After many unsuccessful attempts Reynard is finally persuaded to accompany the beaver to meet the lion and other mem-

bers of the beast family; but even here the evil propensities of the fox are shown.

"Not far from the roadside there stood a dwelling of holy nuns, where many geese and capons were seen wandering without the walls. As they were conversing, the fox gradually drew Grimbard out of the right path, and finding the pullets picking near the barn, among which was a fine fat capon that had strayed a little way from the rest, he made a sudden spring and caught him by the feathers, which flew about his ears; yet the capon escaped. At this sight Grimbard cried out, 'Accursed wretch! What would you do? Will you for a silly pullet again fall into all your sins?' To which Reynard replied, 'Pardon me, dear nephew; but I had forgotten myself. I do entreat your forgiveness, and my eye shall not wander.' Then they went over a little bridge, the fox still glancing his eye towards the pullets as if it were impossible for him to refrain; for the evil was bred in his bones, and it stuck fast to his flesh; his heart carried his eyes that way as long as he could see them. The brock, aware of this, again said, 'For shame, dissembler! Why wander your eyes after the fowls?' The fox replied, 'Nay, nephew, you do me wrong; you mistake my looks, for I was merely saying a paternoster for the souls of all the pullets and geese which I have slain before my piety interfered.' 'Well,' said Grimbard, 'it may be so, but your glances are very suspicious.'

"Now by this time they had regained the highway, and pushed on more speedily to the court, which the fox no sooner saw than his heart began to quake for fear. He knew too well the crimes he had to answer for; they were indeed infinite and heinous."

18. The narrative continues through many an interesting page, and in the end the evil-doer is punished by

death for all his iniquities, and there is great rejoicing and feasting in the court of the king of beasts. We are not surprised when we read that this poem of *Reynard the Fox* was written by a priest, a certain Nivardus of Ghent. The author certainly had in mind to instruct as well as amuse his readers. What Dante did a century later by weaving the teachings of the Church into his immortal poem, Nivardus did for a simpler and less tutored age. In the sublime pages of the Italian poet and the allegorical tale of the Flemish author we find the same lessons and the same doctrine. Each in his own style brought before the people, as did the mystery plays, the truths of Christianity. Each puts before us in a most striking way the religious character of the men and women of those remote times. It is a proof of the people's interest in religion and their enjoyment of things of an elevated nature. They not only read and understood romances like *Reynard the Fox*, and the poems of Dante and Chaucer, but they found interest in watching for hours the wonderful representations of their holy religion in the mystery plays.

Topics and Questions for Reading and Discussion

1. *Piers Plowman* is a serious poem, yet it was most popular What inference may be drawn in regard to the tastes of the people in the fourteenth century?

2. Make a study of the great plague at the middle of the fourteenth century, and show how national calamities effect the social life of a people.

3. *Piers Plowman* is an allegory. Has this form of writing a special appeal to readers?

4. Has our modern novel any relation to an allegory in the presentation of social conditions?

5. Many people have a very false idea in regard to pre-Reformation times, and imagine that religion consisted largely of pilgrimages and indulgences without having any influence over the lives

of the people. Show from the contents of this poem that religion had a most practical bearing and that its influence on social life was both elevating and beneficial.

6. The poem insists on the punishment of evil in the future life. Did such a doctrine add to the social influence of the period?

7. Do you think that the people were as interested in social problems in the fourteenth century as they are at present?

8. What indications would you point out as hopeful for our present social problems?

9. A recent speaker claimed that our civilization was safeguarded by two things: newspapers and political parties. What do you think of such a remark?

10. State in your own words what you consider the two most salutary means of preserving our present civilization and social life.

11. *Piers Plowman* denounced the corruptions of the times in both Church and State. Is not such honest criticism helpful?

12. St. Thomas More in his *Utopia* (do not fail to read this book) was very critical of abuses in the Church, and especially among priests and monks. Yet he died for his convictions of the doctrines of the Church. Was there any contradiction in his action?

13. It has been pointed out by thoughtful students that even the most sacred things and persons were subjected to ridicule when abuses crept in; yet owing to the reverence of the age no evil effects followed from such action.

14. *Reynard the Fox* was perhaps the "best seller" of the Middle Ages; what conclusion would you draw in regard to the minds of the people and their social condition?

CHAPTER XIV

ABUSES IN TRADE; USURY AND BANKS OF CHARITY

1. Merchant monopolies. 2. The Church condemned monopolies. 3. Private fortunes. 4. Cleavage between rich and poor. 5. The Lombards as usurers. 6. Jewish usurers. 7. Persecution of the Jews. 8. Attitude of the Church towards the Jews. 9. St. Thomas Aquinas on the duties of wealth. 10. Social obligations of all classes. 11. The preventive nature of almsgiving. 12. Conditions of bartering. 13. St. Thomas on usury. 14. Banks of Charity. 15. Conditions of trade in England. 16. The influence of St. Francis of Assisi. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. While the guild system was being perfected throughout Europe, there gradually arose a class of merchants who became a real detriment to the interests of the people. As long as they employed honorable methods of business and assisted in carrying the surplus of one country to be exchanged for that of other lands, they were of real benefit to their communities; but becoming firmly established in Venice, Lisbon, Antwerp, and other ports, they were enabled to buy up all the rich shipments from the East, and to sell their goods at any arbitrary standard upon which they agreed. When these merchants had formed a monopoly in foreign goods, they turned to the products of the farms and the guilds, and often raised the price of the very necessities of life beyond the reach of the deserving poor. They were called "bloodsuckers" and "corn and wine usurers." In a diet at Cologne in 1512 it was decreed: "Whereas during the last few years there have arisen in the Empire

great trading companies whose object is to buy up and keep under their own control all sorts of wares and merchandise, spices, ore, woolen cloths, etc., in order that they may traffic with them on their own terms, and fix the prices entirely for their own profit and advantage; and whereas they thus do great injury to the Holy Empire and all the estates thereof, contrary to all the privileges granted by the emperor, and to all honorable dealing; so be it enacted, for the furtherance of the common welfare, that all such injurious proceedings shall henceforth be forbidden, and no one allowed to carry them on. And if any be found guilty of such action in the future, their goods and chattels shall be confiscated and handed over to the rulers and magistrates of the place. Furthermore, they shall not receive protection from any of the imperial authorities."[1]

2. "Whoever buys up corn, meat, and wine," says Trithemius, "in order to drive up their price and to amass money at the cost of others is, according to the laws of the Church, no better than a common criminal. In a well-governed community all arbitrary raising of prices in the case of articles of food and clothing should be peremptorily stopped; in times of scarcity merchants who have supplies of such commodities can be compelled to sell them at fair prices; for in every community — as the Fathers teach and as the nature of things requires — care should be taken that all the members be provided for, and not only a small number be allowed to grow rich and revel in luxury, to the hurt and prejudice of the many. Care and consideration must be given to the poor and the less well-to-do, and the laws must provide for their protection. This is what the canon law requires, and, in accordance with it, in every well-regulated community

[1] Quoted by Janssen, vol. II, p. 83.

the right prices are fixed and the right wages for labor, so that no one may come to want, and everyone, according to his or her position, have sufficient food and clothing."[1]

3. Legislation failed to check the abuses of monopolies, and both corn and wine doubled in price within a few years. In some of the more wealthy trading centers, like Augsburg and Nuremberg, representatives of trading companies bought up whole markets within the cities, or met the individual tradesmen at the city gates and offered such tempting prices that they were able to secure all the merchandise. When once a monopoly had been formed, the companies could demand any price. Not satisfied with this gain, dishonest merchants adulterated many of their wares, thereby reaping a double profit. Some of these dealers grew wealthy within a short time, and we have an instance of a merchant of Augsburg who in six years (1511–1517) increased his wealth from 400 to 24,000 florins. But the richest and most influential of these merchants were the Fuggers. At the beginning of the fourteenth century the head of the family was a poor weaver in Augsburg, but gradually by trade and usury he came into possession of great riches. It is difficult to compute the combined wealth of the various branches of the Fugger family; but we know that in the beginning of the sixteenth century the fortune was increased thirteen million florins in seven years.

4. One ruinous feature of this period of speculation and money craze was the desire of every one to become wealthy. Poor artisans invested the savings of a lifetime, only to discover shortly that their money had been squandered in wild adventures. It is remarkable how quickly this spirit of greed and craving for wealth in-

[1] *Id.*, p. 103

creased and how rapidly there was created an inseparable barrier between the enormously rich and the suffering poor. Only a few years previously there had been little wealth and little poverty, but a general state of equality; but now the poor were downtrodden and despised, while the rich gained in power and arrogance. Owing to the many abuses which arose in trading, merchants were often held in evil repute. Agriculture was first in honor, as the farmer produced the very necessities of life; then came the work of the guilds; but trade and commerce were gradually looked upon as disgraceful and often as dishonest.

5. As the evils of monopoly grew out of the real need for the exchange of goods, so those of usury were the results of lending money. Merchants passing from one country to another found it necessary to exchange their own coins for those of local use — the Italian florin for the German gulden. Owing to the location of excellent ports, much of the merchandise of central Europe passed through Italy, and hence there arose in the northern part of the country certain moneychangers who gradually received the name of Lombards. They were known as extortioners when dealing with merchants, and as usurers when lending money to others. Having acquired great wealth, they became indispensable to the communities, and, being the sole owners of large amounts of ready cash, they would make any demands for loans which people in needy circumstances asked of them. Thus it was that a system of usury grew up as the result of the exchange of money and became one of the social evils of the later Middle Ages.

"Usury," wrote Wimpheling, "has gone on increasing since so many foreign things have been brought into our country, creating new wants and ambitions in the lower

classes. Usury is cruel, and much practised by the Jews, as well as by many Christians who are worse than Jews. It is impossible to dispense with the system of exchange of money, and the lender has a right to some profit, but usury and moneylending as a trade are the ruin of a nation. Woe the day when the reins fell into hands of wealth and gold began to beget ever more and more gold!"

6. Although many Christians, and especially the Lombards, were guilty of usury, the Jews were most to blame for the intolerable situation, and seemed to know no bounds in their extortion. In 1351, in Frankfort, the Jews charged forty-three per cent interest, and at another time fifty-two per cent; and in Augsburg, Mayence, and other cities they even received eighty-six per cent interest. It is claimed, but on doubtful authority, that the Lombards at one time charged one hundred and thirty per cent for yearly loans. Well could a poor citizen of Erbach cry out, "God have mercy on us! It is a sin and a shame the way the poor man is robbed by the Jews, who have established themselves in every little village, and for every florin lent charge six times as much, charging interest and compound interest until the poor man has nothing left."

"It is easily understood," wrote Trithemius, "how a deep hatred of the usurious Jews has taken root among high and low, learned and ignorant, prince and peasant. I approve of any lawful means to protect the people from them. Shall an alien race bear rule over us, and that not through superior knowledge or virtue, but through miserable money, which they look on as the first of all treasures, and in the getting of which they descend to the vilest means? Shall this people grow fat on the

[1] *Id.*, p. 72.

sweat of the peasant and the artisan? This be far from us! But far be it from us also, on the other hand, to persecute the innocent with the guilty, or to hunt down those whose only sin is that they are Jews. To rob them of the possessions which have fallen to them only through the improvidence of princes and rulers is unjust. . . .

"Not by violent, unchristian persecution and reprisal must we seek to rid ourselves of the Jews, but we should aim at depriving them of the means of practicing usury and deceit and at converting them into useful workers. It is the duty of the authorities to judge where wrong is done and to oblige the Jews to make restitution for that of which they have become wrongfully possessed."[1]

7. As a result of this bitter feeling against the Jews, they were often driven from the cities, and especially from those localities where they held the greatest power. From 1432 to 1470 the entire Jewish population was forced to depart from such centers of trade as Mayence, Brunn, Erfurt, and Augsburg. It was decided by the city council of Heilbronn in 1476 that no Jew should be allowed to enter the city, and that those who were there should not be permitted to engage in moneylending, so as to avoid all possibility of usury. In 1498 the Jews were expelled from Nuremburg, since "they had become so numerous and through their usurious dealings they had become possessed of all the property of many respectable citizens, whom they had dragged into misery and dishonor." As a result of the legislation a general exodus of the Jewish population began, each carrying with him his household goods. Many Christians argued that the Jews should be required to engage in manual labor and, "like the Christians, should occupy themselves with agricultural work and with such servile duties as

[1] *Id.*, p. 77.

cleaning the streets." It was recognized, too, that many innocent Jews suffered with the usurers, and that rapacious and covetous princes only too often sought to enrich themselves by expelling the Jews from their dominions.

8. While the Popes endeavored to correct the evils of moneylending, they pleaded for justice to the Jews. In the Lateran Council, in 1179, Alexander III issued a decree against the wholesale persecution of the Jews; and both Clement III and Innocent III sought to restrain the rage of the Christian rulers against the Jewish populace. In a bull Innocent IV proclaimed: "Without public accusation, without trial or proof, heedless of the orders of the Holy See, the Jews have been robbed of their property, starved, persecuted, imprisoned, and otherwise tortured; many of them have been put to the most cruel deaths, so that they suffer under German princes and nobles as much as their fathers did under Pharaoh in Egypt."[1]

9. When referring to usury as one of the social evils of the later Middle Ages, we must remember that it was practiced only by a few, although it brought disaster to the lives of many. The wealth and prosperity which came to the people were due to the craft guilds, which did not as a body suffer from the taint of cupidity. The greater number of the people both by choice and circumstances kept aloof from usurious practices. Moreover, they were well instructed in their social duties towards their neighbor, and under the general term of almsgiving they included obligations which forestalled all dealings in usury. No writer set forth these obligations more clearly than did the great theologian St. Thomas Aquinas: "As love of our neighbor is a matter of precept, whatever is a necessary condition to the love of our neighbor is a

[1] *Id.*, p. 76.

matter of precept also. Now the love of our neighbor requires that not only should we be our neighbor's well-wishers, but also his welldoers, according to I John iii, 18. 'Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth.' Now in order to be a person's wellwisher and welldoer, we ought to succor his needs; and this is done by almsgiving. Therefore almsgiving is a matter of precept.

"The temporal goods which God grants us are ours as to the ownership, but as to the use of them they belong not to us alone but also to such others as we are able to succor out of what we have over and above our needs. Hence Basil says: 'If you acknowledge them, viz., your temporal goods, as coming from God, is He unjust because He apportions them unequally? Why are you rich while another is poor, unless it be that you may have the merit of a good stewardship and he the reward of patience? It is the hungry man's bread that you withhold, the naked man's cloak that you have stored away, the shoe of the barefoot that you have left to rot, the money of the needy that you have buried underground; and so you injure as many as you might help.'

"There is a time when we sin mortally if we omit to give alms; on the part of the recipient, when we see that his need is evident and urgent and that he is not likely to be succored otherwise; on the part of the giver, when he has superfluous goods which he does not need for the time being, as far as he can judge with probability. Nor need he consider every case that may possibly occur in the future, for this would be to think about the morrow, which Our Lord forbade us to do (Matt. vi, 34), but he should judge what is superfluous and what necessary according as things probably and generally occur." [1]

[1] *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas, II-ii, q. 32, arts, 5-6.

10. Not only the rich man but every Christian has his duties of almsgiving. It will be noted that St. Thomas' interpretation of alms was very broad, as it embraced all the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy: "The distinction of almsdeeds is suitably taken from the various needs of our neighbors; some of which affect the soul, and are relieved by spiritual almsdeeds, while others affect the body, and are relieved by corporal almsdeeds. For corporal need occurs either during this life or afterwards. If it occurs during this life, it is either a common need in respect of things needed by all or it is a special need occurring through some accident supervening.

"In the first case the need is either internal or external. Internal need is twofold: one which is relieved by solid food, viz., hunger, in respect of which we have to feed the hungry; while the other is relieved by liquid food, viz., thirst, and in respect of this we have to give drink to the thirsty. The common need with regard to external help is twofold: one in respect of clothing, and as to this we have to clothe the naked; while the other is in respect of a dwelling place, and as to this we have to harbor the harborless. Again, if the need be special, it is either the result of an internal cause, like sickness, and then we have to visit the sick, or it results from an external cause, and then we have to ransom the captive. After this life we give burial to the dead.

"In like manner spiritual needs are relieved by spiritual acts in two ways — first by asking for help from God, and in this respect we have prayer, whereby one man prays for others; secondly, by giving human assistance, and this in three ways. First, in order to relieve a deficiency on the part of the intellect; and if this deficiency is in the speculative intellect, the remedy is applied by

instructing, and if in the practical intellect, the remedy is applied by counseling. Secondly, there may be a deficiency on the part of the appetitive power, especially by way of sorrow, which is remedied by comforting. Thirdly, the deficiency may be due to an inordinate act; and this may be the subject of a threefold consideration. First, in respect of the sinner, in as much as the sin proceeds from his inordinate will, and thus the remedy takes the form of reproof. Secondly, in respect of the person sinned against; and if the sin be committed against ourselves, we apply the remedy by pardoning the injury. . . . Thirdly, in respect of the result of the inordinate act, on account of which the sinner is an annoyance to those who live with him, even beside his intention; in which case the remedy is applied by bearing with him, especially with regard to those who sin out of weakness, according to Rom. xv, 1, : 'We that are stronger ought to bear the infirmities of the weak,' and not only as regards their being infirm and consequently troublesome on account of their unruly actions, but also by bearing any other burdens of theirs with them, according to Gal. vi, 2: 'Bear ye one another's burdens.' " [1]

11. The social teaching of the Church as expounded by St. Thomas was primarily preventive. In what sense was it preventive when applied to usury? Compare the evils of usury with the modern plague of smallpox. By means of vaccination the spread of smallpox is checked; but the disease is not entirely eradicated. When it seizes its victim curative methods must be employed. Vaccination saves others from the contagion. In the same way the social and economic teaching of the Church acted as a prophylactic against the spread of usury. The evil existed in places and remedies were applied; but, by in-

[1] *Id.*, p. 32, art. 2.

structing the people in regard to the duties of wealth the Church prevented the greater number from entering into usurious practices. The rich were not to make use of wealth and power to force money from the hands of the less fortunate, but they were to give liberally to all in need. The money which they acquired was not their own; they were only the stewards of the possessions of the poor; they were the administrators of the Father in heaven. Woe to them if they failed in their trust!

In explaining this doctrine of the Church and in pointing out her power for good in preventing the spread of usury, we have quoted St. Thomas Aquinas as the representative spokesman of his age. His testimony is corroborated from many other sources. St. Thomas does not forbid bartering and trading, and he allows the lending of money under certain conditions. In the extracts which we have given thus far the Angelic Doctor points out one's social duties in general; in those which are to follow he lays down the conditions for bartering and moneylending.

"A tradesman is one whose business consists in the exchange of things. Exchange of things is twofold; one, natural, as it were, and necessary, whereby one commodity is exchanged for another, or money taken in exchange for a commodity, in order to satisfy the needs of life. Such like trading, properly speaking, does not belong to tradesmen, but rather to housekeepers or civil servants who have to provide the household or the state with the necessaries of life. The other kind of exchange, properly speaking, regards tradesmen. The former kind of exchange is commendable because it supplies a natural need; but the latter is justly deserving of blame, because, considered in itself, it satisfies the greed for gain, which knows no limit and tends to infinity; hence trading,

considered in itself, has a certain debasement attaching thereto, in so far as, by its very nature, it does not imply a virtuous or necessary end. Nevertheless, gain, which is the end of trading, though not implying, by its nature, anything virtuous or necessary, does not, in itself, connote anything sinful or contrary to virtue; wherefore nothing prevents gain from being directed to some necessary or even virtuous end, and thus trading becomes lawful.

12. "The measures of salable commodities must needs be different in different places, on account of the difference of supply; because where there is greater abundance, the measures are wont to be larger. However, in each place those who govern the state must determine the just measures of things salable, with due consideration for the conditions of place and time. Hence it is not lawful to disregard such measures as are established by public authority or custom." [1]

It is evident from the above paragraphs that St. Thomas does not admit trading and bartering to an equality with the work of the crafts or with agriculture; for the latter produce things, while the former only exchange them, and often to the detriment of the community. In the last paragraph the Angelic Doctor anticipates the modern problem of supply and demand, and admits the principle that prices may be higher or lower in proportion to the amount of merchandise on hand or to the demand for it. He likewise points out that local authorities may set the price on articles according to circumstances of time and place.

13. Let us briefly consider the teaching of St. Thomas in regard to usury. "To take usury for money lent is unjust in itself, because this is to sell what does not

[1] *Id.*, q. 77, arts, 3-4.

exist, and this evidently leads to inequality, which is contrary to justice.

"In order to make this evident, we must observe that there are certain things the use of which consists in their consumption; thus we consume wine when we use it for drink, and we consume wheat when we use it for food. Wherefore in such like things the use of the thing must not be reckoned apart from the thing itself, and whoever is granted the use of the thing is granted the thing itself; and for this reason, to lend things of this kind is to transfer the ownership. Accordingly if a man wanted to sell wine separately from the use of the wine, he would be selling the same thing twice, or he would be selling what does not exist; wherefore he would evidently commit a sin of injustice. In like manner he commits an injustice who lends wine or wheat and asks for double payment; viz., one, the return of the thing in equal measure; the other, the price of the use, which is called usury.

"On the other hand there are things the use of which does not consist in their consumption; thus to use a house is to dwell in it, and not to destroy it. Wherefore in such things both may be granted; for instance, one man may hand over to another the ownership of his house while reserving to himself the use of it for a time; or vice versa, he may grant the use of the house, while retaining the ownership. For this reason a man may lawfully make a charge for the use of his house, and, besides this, revindicate the house from the person to whom he has granted its use, as happens in renting and letting a house. . . .

"A lender may without sin enter an agreement with the borrower for compensation for the loss he incurs of something he ought to have, for this is not to sell the use of money but to avoid a loss. It may also happen that

the borrower avoids a greater loss than the lender incurs; wherefore the borrower may repay the lender with what he has gained. . . . He that entrusts his money to a merchant or craftsman so as to form a kind of society does not transfer the ownership of his money to them; for it remains his, so that at his risk the merchant speculates with it, or the craftsman uses it for his craft, and consequently he may lawfully demand as something belonging to him part of the profits derived from his money." [1]

In this last sentence St. Thomas anticipates the widest application of the use of loans in modern business life, and not only defends the practice, but gives his reason why interest may be accepted on money.

14. When the Lombards and the Jews had been expelled from the commercial centers of Europe, it was necessary to replace their usurious system with some method of lending and borrowing money. Hence we find the beginning of banks, which were often formed by the municipalities. At the end of the fifteenth century Nuremberg had several of these houses where money could be exchanged and where those in need could borrow small amounts at a very low rate of interest. If there was a surplus in the banks after paying the employees, it went for the upkeep of the city. The Church encouraged the foundation of these banks, and by her legislation was far more effective in combating usury than was the secular power.

[1] *Id.*, q. 78, arts. 1-2. A complete English version of the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas has been made available for students. The literal translation is admirably done by the Dominican Fathers of the English Province, and is published by Benziger Bros. Vols. ii, iii, and iv of the Second Part, known as *Secunda-Secundae*, treat of the cardinal virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, and comprise a wealth of material on social duties.

While the Lombards plied their trade in northern Italy, it remained for another part of the same country to find a solution of the difficulties of exorbitant interest. In the middle of the fifteenth century a simple monk, Barnabas of Terni, raised an outcry against the Jews, Lombards, and their associates. Through his instrumentality (1462) there was founded at Perugia in Italy a "Mons Pietatis" or Bank of Charity. The word *mons*, the Latin term for mountain, had been used in Florence and other republics of Italy to signify a large sum of money which was demanded from the citizens as a loan for the public expense. When usury became an abuse in the communities, and banks were formed to lend money on a very low per cent of interest, these institutions were called "Montes Pietatis."

From numerous rich people Barnabas collected money and jewelry, and with this meager beginning began to make small loans to the needy poor, charging only sufficient interest to defray the expenses of administration. So successful was the venture that other banks were opened at Orvieto, Viterbo, Savona, Bologna, Milan, and other cities. It was due principally to the Franciscan Fathers that the movement made great progress; and under their guidance not only the cities but the towns of Italy established their own banks.

A controversy had arisen among theologians of the Church in regard to the justice of accepting even a small amount of interest for loans; and the Jews made use of the divided opinions to accuse the Banks of Charity of usurious practices. In the Council of Lateran (1517) the charges against the banks were examined and their practices sustained, provided interest was charged only to defray the expenses of administration. Later the Council of Trent set its seal of approbation upon the

movement and classified the Banks of Charity among approved charitable institutions. In 1539, under Paul III, the bank at Rome was sanctioned, and it long remained in a most prosperous condition, making loans at two per cent on large sums and gratuitously on small amounts.

As early as 1593 a Bank of Charity was founded in Paris, and for three centuries was the means of assisting the distressed of that city and the surrounding country. As these institutions proved successful and answered the needs of the times, they grew in number and importance, some of them remaining under the charge of religious houses, like that of the Brethren of Notre Dame in Avignon, and others passing under the administration of the cities and the crown. The Lombards, after being driven from most of the countries of Europe, found protection in Holland, where they remained until the middle of the sixteenth century, and were finally suppressed by Charles V.

15. While usury was recognized as one of the greatest social and economic problems of the continent, England, with the exception of the large cities, remained comparatively free from its baneful influences. "English citizens in the fourteenth century insisted on a rigorous exclusion of foreign competition, but they shrank from the practice of usury as a deadly sin. The impression left on our minds is that they understood their own interest too well to be mistaken in this matter. Their distrust of alien competitors was prompted by the instinct in a rude state of society, and their aversion from usury was equally caused by an instinctive desire to provide for the welfare of all alike. No place could be found for capitalists and financiers in their economic theory. This, at least, was the avowed object of the lay and spiritual

rulers who desired to follow the traditional policy marked out by the great English kings, while the relations of an unworthy or necessitous sovereign with Jewish mortgagees and Flemish or Lombard farmers of the customs must assuredly have inflamed the passionate prejudices of their subjects.

"But though capital was growing, there was as yet little borrowing or investing for commercial or manufacturing purposes. All lending at interest was regarded as usurious and wrong. The Chancellor Morton urged Parliament to repress it on the express ground that it was a 'barren' employment of money, diverting wealth from its natural use in trading. In other words, he took for granted that lending must be unproductive. Accordingly an act was passed in the year 1488 making all lending at interest criminal. The usurious bargain was to be null and void. The lender was to be heavily fined, and further punished, for his soul's good, under the ecclesiastical laws. Morton's language and that of this act make it clear that the modern practice of lending at interest for business purposes was practically unknown. The usury aimed at was the lending at interest to spendthrifts or unfortunates. The building up of industries by means of credit, which transfers the use of capital to the hands that can use it most efficiently, was as yet scarcely thought of." [1]

16. In treating of usury we have pointed out how the Church counteracted the evils by her positive enactments and her inculcation of virtues, and we have insisted on the preventive nature of such actions. But the teaching of the Church would have been ineffective without the power of example. The Divine Master had ennobled manual labor more by example than by precept; and the years spent at Nazareth changed the attitude of all

[1] *Social England,* edited by D. H. Trail, p. 159.

Christian nations towards those who toiled. It was the example of the followers of St. Benedict that induced the wandering nations of Europe to adopt permanent settlements and give their lives to agriculture and trade; and when, at a later period, the Christian nations were wedded to wealth and luxury, it was St. Francis of Assisi (1181–1226) who won the hearts of the people from the greed and pleasures of the world. When he turned from his life of song, merriment, and display, and put on the coarse woolen tunic of the Umbrian peasant, and went forth to teach men to despise riches and to rejoice in poverty and loneliness, he did more than the legislation of any court or council to counteract man's inordinate love of ease and riches. His followers bore his message to every quarter of the Christian world, and, while they would have scorned the appellation of social workers or philanthropists, they made men seek for peace and contentment in poverty, and in so doing they held back the insatiate desire for gold and taught men to shrink from usury as they would shrink from any other crime. In setting forth the power of example we must not overlook the tens of thousands of noble women who, before and after the time of St. Francis, turned the minds of the people from the foolish pursuit of riches and pleasure by their lives of contentment with a self-imposed poverty.

Topics and Questions for Discussion

1. Give your own definition of a monopoly.
2. Describe the monopolies of the Middle Ages.
3. Are monopolies necessarily an evil to a community?
4. Mention three monopolies which extend their power through the country.
5. Are monopolies ever restricted to cities or states?
6. Is the cold-storage system a monoply?
7. Does the Church condemn all monopolies?

8. Do you think that great private fortunes, such as those of Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford are a benefit to the country?

9. We say that money in the Middle Ages was not productive. Explain.

10. Read the article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* on usury.

11. May it not be a greater evil to pay a very small wage than to practice usury?

12. Why was not the Church able to prohibit the Lombards from practicing usury?

13. Show how the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy may be preventive methods.

14. One of the Spiritual Works of Mercy is to counsel the doubtful. Point out how this may be a social benefit.

15. Why could St. Thomas Aquinas lay down principles of exchange which are applicable to our times?

16. Explain the teaching of St. Thomas in regard to the duties of the rich.

17. Do you think that St. Thomas was too strict in his teaching in regard to the duties of wealth?

18. Do you think that Carnegie understood the duties of wealth when he gave so many millions for libraries?

19. Are not our American millionaires conscious of the duties of wealth? Notice the millions which are given for education.

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CHAPTER XV

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN EUROPE PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION

The Church House; Fairs

1. The use of the church house almost universal. 2. Work for the common chest. 3. Description of a church house. 4. Women as social workers. 5. Community coöperation. 6. Drunkenness not a social evil. 7. Administering parish funds. 8. Source of real happiness; democratic spirit. 9. The importance of fairs and social life. 10. Local markets in villages. 11. First development of fairs in Italy. 12. Wonderful growth and management in France. 13. Peculiar feature of fairs in England. 14. Democratic spirit manifested at the fairs. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. In the Middle Ages there were numerous social centers connected with the churches. "From the font to the grave the greater number of people lived within the sound of the church bells. It provided them with all the consolations of religion, and linked itself with such amusements as it did not directly supply. A parish, with all the great interests involved in its proper management, required some place where parish meetings could be held. They were sometimes, no doubt, held in the aisle of the parish church, but this arrangement was for obvious reasons inconvenient, and a church house became a necessity. Its existence was apparently almost universal." [1]

All legal and social difficulties of the parish were settled in the church house. We have an instance in Can-

[1] Cardinal Gasquet, *Parish Life in Medieval England.*

terbury, in 1485, where there was a dispute between two parishioners. They met at the church house and happily agreed to arbitrate the matter; and the churchwardens settled the dispute to the satisfaction of both parties. In the same parish a contention between two families was settled by the priest and four parishioners. The church house was frequently let out to tenants for various purposes, with a reservation of its use when necessary for parochial meetings. Thus, at Wigtoft, the rent of the house brought in a regular sum of money to the churchwardens. At Straton, in 1513, the accounts show a receipt of eight pence from Richard Rowell for occupying the church house. At the annual fair time the church house was frequently occupied by wandering merchants to display their goods. Sometimes there was land belonging to the parish, which was rented together with the house. If there were receipts, there were of course expenses. Repairs were frequent, which shows probably that the church houses were much used.

2. "In many cases it is clear that cooking was done on the premises for the parish meetings. In some Wiltshire accounts there is evidence of this, and of utensils of various kinds being kept in the house for parochial feasting and for ministering to the poor. The householders made merry and collected money for church purposes, and the younger people had dancing and bowls in many places, while the ancients sat gravely by.

"One of the ways of eliciting good will among the parishioners, and also of making profit for the common chest, was the church ale. This was a parish meeting at which cakes and small beer were purchased from the churchwardens, and consumed for the good of the parish. No doubt there were amusements of various kinds during the drinking and there was generally a collection. At

Cratfield, for instance, in 1490, the chief source of income was from the church ales. There were about five of these parish feasts held in each year." [1]

Very commonly a collection for the expenses of the common amusements was made by the workingmen on the first Monday of work after the Christmas holidays. They drew a plow round to the various houses, asking for donations, and from this the day became known as Plow Monday.

3. "Mr. Peacock, in the *Archæological Journal* (vol. xl), has given some interesting particulars he has been able to gather about the village ales. The drink itself was apparently a sweet beverage made with hops or bitter herbs. It was not the same as the more modern beer; but was less heavy, and hardly an intoxicant. The meetings were by no means devoid of the religious aspect, and to some extent their purpose and connection with the church secured this. Cups were used which were frequently dedicated, especially the general or loving cup, to saints. At Boston there was a tankard named after St. Thomas.

"Mr. Peacock thus sketches the probable appearance of one of these halls for holding the church ale. 'We must picture to ourselves a long, low room with an ample fireplace, or rather a big open chimney occupying one end with a vast hearth. Here the cooking would be done and the water boiled for brewing the church ale. There would be, no doubt, a large oak table in the middle, with benches around, and a lean-to building on one side to act as a cellar." [2]

4. The second Monday and Tuesday after Easter were the Eastertide Days, on which, with some sportive tradi-

[1] *Id.*, chapter on "The Church House."
[2] *Id.*, chapter on "The Church House."

tional customs, money was collected for parish purposes. According to an early custom, women seized and bound men and then demanded a small payment for their release. This seems to have been later prohibited; and then recourse was had to stopping the men on roadways and bridges with ropes and demanding a toll from all men who desired to pass. For example, at Shire in Surrey, in 1536, eight shillings are entered in the accounts as coming from the collection of pennies by the married women on Easter Monday.

In another account we learn that the maidens kept a bridge over which all had to pass on this Easter Monday, and that they gathered much in the way of fees for passengers. It may be here remarked that in the way of raising money for parish work, or, in particular, for the beautifying of their churches, the womenfolk were in no way behind the men.

5. "Many of the things that in these days advanced politicians would desire to see introduced into the village communities of modern England, to relieve the deadly dullness of country life, were seen in Durham and Cumberland in full working order in pre-Reformation days. Local provisions for public health and general convenience are evidenced by the watchful vigilance of the village officials over the water supplies, the care taken to prevent the fouling of useful streams, and stringent by-laws as to the common place for clotheswashing, and the times for emptying and cleansing ponds and mill dams. Labor was lightened and the burdens of life eased by coöperation on an extensive scale. A common mill ground the corn, and the flour was baked into bread at a common oven. A common smith worked at the common forge, and common shepherds and herdsmen watched the sheep and cattle of various tenants, which were

pastured on the fields common to the whole village community." [1]

6. In reading of the simple habits and amusements of the people of these bygone days we are apt to attribute to them the vices of our own times. In fact history has studiously attempted to blacken the name of our ancestors and to give us a false impression of the simple institutions of those days. Later the curse of drink settled down upon England, but this was only at the close of the seventeenth century. When the old-fashioned ale or beer was partly set aside (1690) there began among the people the custom of drinking English gin. "It must be remembered that in the Middle Ages coffee and tea were unknown and undreamt of; that brandy, gin, and rum were as yet undiscovered; and that wine then, as it is now, was the rich man's beverage. Some ardent spirits, known as cordials, were to be found in the mansions of the great, and were generally kept by the lady of the house among her simples, and only dealt out to favored guests upon special occasions by the thimbleful. The beverages of the common people were almost exclusively water, cider, and beer." [2]

"No doubt there were cases of drunkenness, but it was not the curse that it became in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and from that on to our time. Because we have witnessed the terrible scourge of intemperance, we must not imagine that it was one of the social evils of former days. In the reign of Elizabeth Englishmen reverted to the characteristic vices of their rude Anglo-Saxon progenitors, gluttony and drunkenness becoming rife . . . Between 1690 and 1692 the output of

[1] *Id.*, chapter on "The Church House.

[2] Fred W. Hackwood, *Inns, Ales, and Drinking Customs of Old England*, p. 40.

the licensed London breweries fell from 2,088,000 barrels to 1,523,000, while at the same time a great impetus was given to the manufacture and consumption of spirituous liquors. It was not long ere the working classes were found to be discarding honest old-fashioned English beer, and to be acquiring a passion for English gin. . . . For a century or so after the Reformation the Puritans indicted in thousands of parishes up and down the country the beneficed clergy of the newly established Church of England for being tipplers and frequenters of taverns in which they gamed with cards." [1]

Dr. Augustus Jessopp[2] has given us an account of social life in England prior to the Reformation and has pointed out how the lives of the people were centered around the parish. Most of the information which we gather from his essay will not be found in the ordinary histories of England. Dr. Jessopp was among the first to call our attention to the parish system and to point out how much was accomplished by the parish independently of monasteries and monastic churches.

7. Contrary to the ordinary opinion, the management of the parish was not left to the parish priests, but was in the hands of a deliberative assembly. This elective body taxed the parishioners, supervised the spending of the

[1] Hackwood, p. 92, etc.

[2] *Before the Great Pillage*, T. Fisher Unwin, London. This work of Dr. Jessopp is not a book, but an essay of seventy-five pages. The real title is *Parish Life in England before the Great Pillage*, most of the matter being drawn from the old parish records. The principal value of Dr. Jessopp's essay is that it has called attention to the wonderful amount of material in these registers. By the Great Pillage Dr. Jessopp does not refer to the robbing of monasteries under Henry VIII, but to "the ring of robbers who robbed the poor and helpless in the reign of Edward VI and who were ten times worse than the first."

income, and every year gave a balance sheet which in most respects would meet the requirements of a modern business firm. Nearly every parishioner at his death bequeathed something to the church. This together with numerous donations made the parish organization comparatively rich. "The property belonging to the parishes during the centuries before the great spoliation was enormous, and was always growing. It consisted of houses and lands; of flocks and herds; of precious jewels and costly vessels of silver and gold; of ornaments and church furniture; of bells and candlesticks, crosses and organs, and tapestry and banners; of vestments which were miracles of splendor in their colors and materials and incomparable artistic finish of needlework; not to speak of the fine linen and the veils, the carpets and the hangings; and last, not least, the service books, which were continually needing to be mended, bound, or replaced by new copies, and that at a cost which we moderns even now find it difficult to accept as credible." [1]

We mention the income of the parish because we wish to insist on the fact that the parish, as such, took care of every form of social work, although very frequently its ministrations passed through the guild members. Thus in England there were two great systems of social activities, those of the monasteries and those of the parishes. In our chapter on the guilds we have enumerated the various forms of social activities which they undertook; and what has been said of the guilds may be claimed for the parishes.

8. Not only was every social activity connected with the parish, but from the parish there sprang the very fountain of all the mirth and happiness which came to the people of those times. "And thus it came to pass

[1] Jessopp, p. 13.

that all that was joyous and gay in their lives, all that was beautiful and ennobling, all that was happy in their recollections, all that was best in what they imagined, all that was elevating in their dreams and their hopes and their aspirations — all came to them from the influence which their churches exercised upon them." [1]

Civic and social festivities were closely connected with the guilds and with feast days of the Church; and often the guild statutes give the most detailed and interesting accounts of the enjoyments of the people. The confraternity of the tailors at Salisbury decreed, on the fourteenth of December, 1461, that the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist should be solemnly celebrated:

"And that our said wardens, stewards, and chamberlains, with all our holy craft and fraternity and our servants, to be attended upon by the mayor of the city of the time, and other worshipful with him of the same, to bring in the light of our said fraternity from the chandler's house unto the said St. Thomas' church, unto St. John's chapel there; and there to abide at the mass, and offer at the same, all our craft. And which if our craft lack, and be not at the said mass and offering thereof, to give to our said craft one pound of wax, without a lawful excuse is made to the wardens and to the stewards.

"That the ten stewards for the time being, every year, shall make and set afore St. John the Baptist, upon the altar, two tapers of one pound of wax, and a garland of roses, to be set upon St. John's head, and that the chapel be strewed with green rushes. And when mass is done, to go together to our place accustomed, where our dinner shall be holden and there to abide at dinner and feast till we have dined; for the which dinner every master of

[1] *Id.*, p. 20.

the said craft shall pay, for him and his wife, twelvepence, and for their supper if they will come thereto, the same money. A man alone eightpence, and a woman alone sixpence; and no dinner, neither feast, longer by us to be kept, save only the same day, and that yearly, to be kept while the world standeth.

"And such persons of our craft as have promised our stewards to come to dinner, and come not, they shall pay each of them eightpence to the use of the stewards which merit and do the cost of that day.

"Also we have ordained that at the said feast and dinner such of our servants called journeymen as be within our said craft shall serve the masters of the craft, in the time of bringing in our light, and at our feast and dinner; there abiding with us at dinner, at such place as the masters and wardens will assign. At which dinner every servant to pay fourpence; and that our said stewards, when the masters be served in at the first course, they shall purvey an honest place for all such servants, to be set at a board or boards conveniently within the same place, and to be served by the apprentices, at the masters' assignment, conveniently for their degree.

"And then for the second course of the masters, by the said stewards they be warned to arise, and to serve in likewise the said masters as they did the first course, making them as merry as they can.

"The stewards to make yearly eight torches, weighing five score pounds and seven, and also five tapers, to be brought on midsummer day to St. Thomas' church worshipfully, after the old rule and our custom; for the which making of torches and tapers aforesaid the said chamberlains shall receive of every brother and sister that be coupled twelvepence and for every journeyman

fourpence, and hereof to make a reckoning afore our founder while he is alive." [1]

A statute (1389) of the guild of the Holy Cross at Stratford-on-Avon reads: "It is ordained by the brethren and sisters that each of them shall give twopence a year, at a meeting which shall be held once a year, viz., a feast which shall be held in Easter week, in such manner that brotherly love shall be cherished among them, and evil speaking be driven out, that peace shall always dwell among them, and true love be upheld. And every sister of the guild shall bring with her to this feast a great tankard; and all the tankards shall be filled with ale; and afterwards the ale shall be given to the poor. So likewise shall the brethren do. But before that ale shall be given to the poor, and before any brother or sister shall touch the feast in the hall, all the brethren and sisters there shall pray, that God and the Blessed Virgin, and the venerable Cross, in whose honor they have come together, will keep them from all ills and sins. And if any brother or sister shall, after the bell has sounded, quarrel, or stir up a quarrel, he shall pay a halfpenny." [2]

In the earlier and more primitive life of the parish social gatherings were held within the churches. Here, too, the mystery plays were enacted; but as these plays and gatherings became less serious, and when a great deal of frivolity was joined with them, the church did not seem the place for such gatherings; and consequently the church house, and often the guildhall was erected for such uses. "In these assemblies there was no distinction between lord and vassal, high and low, rich and poor;

[1] *Our Lady's Dowry*, by T. E. Bridget, c. xii, Burns & Oates, London, 1875.

[2] *Id.*, c. xii.

in them the people learnt the worth of being free. Here were the schools in which, in the slow course of centuries, they were disciplined to self-help, self-reliance, and self-respect — virtues which, it may be, are slowly learnt, but whereby alone a nation acquires a true conception of what liberty means, and at last gets to see that the ground of all our claims to enjoy the rights of manhood or of citizenship rests upon the grand fact of our being all members of a divine community, and so entitled to the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." [1]

9. Among the most important social institutions of Europe, beginning in Italy with the fifth century and coming down to our own time, were the national and international fairs. How deeply they were rooted in the lives and customs of the people may be seen in the introduction to *Vanity Fair*. At a time when people traveled little, fairs offered an attractive incentive to bring together not only the people of the various communities but of different nationalities.

The influx of people to any city or town to attend the fairs encouraged the making and repairing of roads and the building and upkeep of bridges. It is a remarkable fact that roads and bridges were in a better condition during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than during the seventeenth; and this no doubt was partly due to the amount of traveling to and from the fairs. Along the approaches to the large centers like Winchester the brush near the roadside was cleared away so as not to offer a protection for robbers. Most of the travelers to the fairs as well as pilgrims walked the entire way. Even many merchants were afoot, with their goods carried on horses or packmules. The roads therefore were not necessarily the best. Many of them would in our day be con-

[1] *Id.*, p. 22.

sidered only rough lanes which heavy rains would in short time render impassable; but the wagons or carts which did pass over them went slowly and were not injured by the constant jolting over rough stones. Royal personages and a few of the lords and ladies traveled in covered wagons drawn by several horses in tandem; still while the horses were often covered with fine trappings and the awnings over the wagons were of rich material, the traveling was rough and inconvenient. But those were days when people gave little thought to the inconveniences of travel. Nor were they afflicted with the modern mania for speed, and were satisfied with the leisurely ways of transit. No doubt the crowd found ample means of amusement and did not count the cost.

It was a motley crowd that traveled from afar to the various fairs. There were numerous pedlers, who frequented the roads and carried various articles to the doors of the country people and the villagers, and who sought the fairs to replenish their stocks and to set out again to ply their trade. There were professional bird-sellers, who had carefully trained their birds to sing and only waited the fairs to dispose of their cages and captives. There were musicians, tumblers, dancers, jugglers, and buffoons — all pushing forward to entertain the simple people who gathered at the fairs. Performing monkeys and trained horses were as popular in the Middle Ages as they are in circuses at present; and any one who was fortunate enough to possess a trained animal was sure to be found with the crowd on its way to a fair. Lords and ladies at times mingled with the crowd, or were followed by merchants and pilgrims who availed themselves of the protection which the retinues afforded against robbers and other miscreants. At nightfall there were inns to receive the tired travelers; and the mon-

astery gates were ever open not only to the king and great personages but to the humblest tradesman. Many by devotion or choice preferred the hospitality of the monks to the company of the unruly crowd which often assembled at the inns and ale-houses.

10. Besides the fairs, which were carried on to an extensive scale, there were numerous local markets which supplied many of the necessities for the household. Stores, as we understand them, did not exist, and the people depended on market days and fairs to do their shopping and to exchange their wares. In many German cities the great markets rivaled in beauty and extent the guild-halls and other quasi-public buildings; and their peculiar style of architecture has left its impress on many towns and villages of central Europe. While the fairs were of great importance and were the scenes not only of trade but amusements, the markets were in reality more necessary for the communities. They were the means by which the surplus produce of the farms was exchanged for the weekly output of the guilds.

In England the markets were jealous of their privileges, and sought by every possible means to prevent others from being established. As towns or villages grew in importance they would naturally seek to have a market, not only for their own convenience but to attract traveling merchants. For instance, when the town of Abingdon, which for a time had only a small market for beer and bread, wished to extend its sales, immediate opposition came from the neighboring town of Oxford, and every effort was made to prevent the opening of a full market. Such was the contention between the towns and villages that a law was passed in the middle of the fourteenth century prohibiting new markets within six miles of those which were in operation. At the Oxford market, held on

Wednesdays and Saturdays, the objects offered for sale included: "hay and straw, faggots, timber, pigs, beer, coal and roots, leather and gloves, furs, linen and cloth, corn and dairy products." Such centers of exchange could be duplicated many times over in most of the important towns and villages in England from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century.

11. In Italy the Roman Empire had scarcely ceased to exercise its power, when the new rulers began to encourage commerce and to revive agriculture. Foreign merchants flocked to the country and brought with them their wares from the East and from northern Europe. In Germany, Charlemagne at the close of the eighth century gave a great impetus to fairs and to all kinds of commerce. It is to France, however, that we must look for the full development of this important social institution. "In no other country in Europe were these fairs of such splendor and importance. In the eighth and ninth centuries hardly any trade was known in France other than that carried on in markets and fairs; these were therefore almost the only places for providing oneself with necessaries." [1]

12. In France, especially, the fairs were held under the protection of the Church and were frequently connected with the religious festivals. In some large cities there were from four to six fairs held every year, many of them lasting over two weeks. Merchants and pedlers of various wares flocked to these centers, and, failing to sell their merchandise, passed on to other markets and places of exhibit. So important were these fairs in the kingdom that royal patents were issued for their encouragement. Exhibitors were exempted from all dues and customs. Special instructions were given that no dealers on the

[1] Cornelius Walford, *Fairs, Past and Present*, p. 6.

A Fair in France — Fifteenth Century

way to the fair should be charged with road tax or bridge tax or be stopped or molested in any way. Numerous officers were appointed to look after the interests of those who came with exhibits. There were notaries to make an exact inventory of the things for sale, and inspectors and judges and wardens; in fine, the whole management of the fairs became highly organized. In the province of Champagne in France seventeen cities yearly sent drapers and traders to the various fairs. So important did the fairs become in certain localities, that cloth could not be sold either by retail or wholesale until it had been first exhibited at some fair. Dealers in leather were obliged to bring their exhibits to fairs. The inspectors were men well qualified to judge of the value of the articles exhibited, and were authorized to seize upon all wares of inferior quality.

13. In England fairs were held, not only in the large cities, but in the smaller towns, and became so numerous and important that they were the principal means of marketing. The Smithfield Market was held every six weeks. Cattle and horses were sold and exchanged; and there were movable stalls for every variety of goods. There was a famous fair at Stourbridge, which was most conveniently located for foreign trade. It began on the eighteenth of September and lasted for three weeks. It was situated in the open country, and temporary booths were erected every year, forming streets which covered a total area of half a square mile. The chief business done seems to have been the sale of wood and cloth for exportation and the purchase of the wares of the Hanse merchants, but every trade and nationality was represented in the numerous streets.

Professor Ashley has given us a full account of the Winchester Fair, which began on August thirty-first of

each year and continued until September fifteenth: "On the morning of August thirty-first, 'the justiciars of the pavilion of the bishop' proclaimed the fair on the hilltop, then rode on horseback through the city, receiving the keys at the gates, took possession of the weighing-machine in the wool market of the city to prevent its being used, and then, with the mayor and bailiffs in their train, rode back to the great tent or pavilion on the hill, where they appointed a special mayor, bailiff, and coroner to govern the city in the bishop's name during fair-time. The hilltop was quickly covered with streets of wooden shops; in one the merchants from Flanders, in another those of Caen or some other Norman town, in another the merchants from Bristol. Here were placed the goldsmiths in a row, and there the drapers; while around the whole was a wooden palisade with guarded entrance — precautions which did not always prevent enterprising adventurers from escaping payment of toll by digging a way in for themselves under the wall."

"On the first day also had appeared, with horses and armor, before the bishop's justiciars, those tenants of the bishop who were bound so to appear by their tenure; from among them three or four were appointed to see that the sentences of their court and the orders of the bishop's marshal were duly executed in the fair, in Winchester and in Southampton. All trade was compulsorily suspended at Winchester and within a seven-league circuit, guards being stationed at outlying posts, on bridges and other places of passage, to see that the monopoly was not infringed. At Southampton, outside the circuit, nothing was to be sold during the fair-time but victuals, and even the very craftsmen of Winchester were bound to transfer themselves to the hill, and there carry on their occupation during the fair.

"There was a graduated scale of tolls and duties; all merchants of London, Winchester, or Wallingford who entered during the first week were free from entrance tolls; after that date new comers paid tolls, except the members of the merchant guild of Winchester. For weighing a bale of wool, fourpence was paid as 'bishop's weighing money,' as well as a penny from the seller and a penny from the buyer as the weigher's fee; and there were similar dues on other goods. In every fair there was a court in which the lord's representative decided by merchant law in all cases of dispute that might arise, suspending for a time the ordinary jurisdiction of the town; at Winchester this was called the Pavilion Court. Hither the bishop's servants brought all the weights and measures to be tested; here the justices determined upon an assize, or fixed scale, for bread, wine, beer, and other victuals, adjudging to the pillory any baker whose bread was found to be of defective weight; and here, every day, disputes between merchants as to debt were decided by juries upon the production and comparison of the notched wooden tallies." [1]

14. Not only were these fairs a means for exchanging and purchasing cloths, provisions, and other useful commodities, but they brought together people of every station of life. Kings and nobles went to them with long retinues, and did not disdain to mingle with the motley crowd. High churchmen were there, and abbots, friars, and monks. People turned out in great crowds; and, while there were no doubt much levity and fun, these meetings had not degenerated into the disgraceful scenes which were enacted during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even down to our present time. No doubt

[1] *An Introduction to English Economic History and Theory*, W. J. Ashley, M.A., Rivingtons, London, pp. 100-102.

there were abuses; but the Church was there to guide, and the fairs had a semi-religious aspect which was a great protection to them. It was only later, when they became purely commercialized, that fraud and deceit crept into every department; and there was such looseness of manners, that fairs began to be looked upon by honest and good people as occasions of dissipation and revolt against the common decencies of ordinary times.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. How did the church house supply recreation for the members of the congregation?
2. What other purposes did the church house serve?
3. What about the number of church houses?
4. What are some of the means of collecting money?
5. What was the effect of having recreation under the direction of the church?
6. To what extent did women take part in the social activities of the community?
7. What proofs have we of a general spirit of coöperation in a Middle Age community?
8. Discuss the following social activities in your city: the social center, the community center, the recreation center.
9. Was drink a social evil during the Middle Ages?
10. What was the social effect of fairs?
11. What were some of the economic effects of fairs?
12. How did the fairs improve good roads and means of travel?
13. What effect had fairs on international problems?
14. How did they improve inns and hospitals?
15. Enumerate some of the social advantages of fairs in the United States.
16. Have fairs in the country an economic value?
17. County and state fairs are losing their popularity. Is this a favorable change?

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CHAPTER XVI

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN EUROPE PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION — *Continued*

Elementary and Religious Education in Germany at the Close of the Fifteenth Century[1]

1. Number of schools and pupils. 2. Payment of teachers. 3. Description of a school. 4. Duties of parents. 5. The ideal Christian home. 6. Use of pictures in education. 7. The introduction of catechisms. 8. Prayerbooks and sermons. 9. Veneration of saints. Indulgences. 10. *Consolation of the Soul*, and other manuals. 11. "Plenaries." 12. Translating and reading the Bible. 13. Exhortations to study the German Bible. 14. The Bible was known and revered by the people.

1. Compulsory education was unknown; but from many records preserved in towns and villages we find that the schools were everywhere well attended. In Xanten, on the Lower Rhine, in 1491, the master of a school for reading and writing complained that he and his assistant were not sufficient for the number of scholars, and begged for another undermaster; whereupon the town supplied him with a second assistant, stipulating, however, that they must arrange with the parents for the additional salary. In the records of Wesel for the year 1494 we find that "five teachers were employed to instruct the children of the town in reading, writing, arithmetic, and choir singing." At Christmas of the same year these said teachers were entertained by the clergy of the town,

[1] Janssen's *History of the German People*. Vol. I, pp. 25-60. Reprinted with permission of the publishers.

and each of them was presented with a piece of cloth for a coat and a small gold coin; "for they have all well earned this reward."

In the district of the Middle Rhine, in the year 1500, there were whole stretches of country where a national school was to be found within a circuit of every six miles. Small parishes even of only 500 or 600 souls, such as Weisenau, near Mayence, Michelstadt, in the Odenwald, were not without their village schools. Throughout the empire, indeed, the number of schools was generally considerable. In many places also there were largely attended girls' schools. One of these especially, founded by Nicholas of Cusa at Xanten in 1497, counted eighty-four scholars, from both the nobility and the citizen classes. At its head stood at that time Aldegundis von Horstmar, who had been trained by the Brethren of the Social Life, and whose system of education for young girls was formed on their rules. The citizens of Lubec founded the cloister of St. Anna in order that the education of their daughters might be carried on in their own city, instead of having to be sent to distant places, as had often been done before. In the year 1508 this institution was consecrated by the Pope.

Special schools were also erected for the children of the nobility; for instance, in the Augustinian Convent at Herdt, near Germersheim, for the nobility of the Speyergau; in Oberlingelheim for that of Rhenish Hesse, and that of the Lahn district of Wetter. This last one owed its origin to Elizabeth von Bruck, the abbess of the convent there, who was looked upon as the benefactress of the whole neighborhood. In 1436 this institution was solemnly consecrated under the name of the "Marienschule." The abbess ordained that three boys from the citizen or peasant classes should also be ad-

mitted, and that if they distinguished themselves by talent, industry, or good conduct, they should be placed on an equal footing with the other scholars. The knight Hans von Schoenstaett and a certain Herr von Rehen bequeathed their estates to this institution, and a priest named Meingot Gulden, who had been its director for years, left it the half of a farmstead at Rosphe.

2. We may judge how deeply learning was appreciated and how highly the position of the teachers was respected, by the high salaries which the latter commanded. Up to the end of the Middle Ages we find nowhere any complaints from teachers of insufficient pay. At a time when a florin would buy from ninety to one hundred pounds of beef or from one hundred to one hundred and twenty-five pounds of pork, the schoolmaster of a small hamlet near Goch received the following remuneration chiefly in kind: From the parish four florins, twelve bushels of barley, eight bushels of wheat, sixty bushels of oats and sixty bundles of straw, besides house and kitchen garden and the use of one-third of an acre of meadow land. Also from each pupil a monthly school fee of five stivers in winter and three in summer; and for services in the church a yearly sum of about two to three florins. In the district of Capellen, near Guelders, in 1510, we find it decreed that each peasant who wished his children taught should pay the teacher three stivers, four bushels of corn, and, if he owned a wagon, a load of wood. In Goch the head teacher had been receiving since 1450, in addition to his house and the school fees, the presents of different sorts from the children, eight florins yearly; to which income was added later on from a church bounty the sum of three and a half gold florins for the singing of Lauds with his pupils; while the salary of the town clerk was only five florins, and that of each of the two burgo-

masters only two and a half florins. At Eltville, in the Rheingau, the schoolmaster received yearly twenty four florins, besides three albuses from each child; the teachers in Kiedrich, in the Rheingau, received from thirty to ninety guilders; the teacher in Seligenstadt, on the Main, received, besides his board and wine, eight bushels of wheat and the fees from the scholars. In the schools at Culmbach and Bayreuth the yearly pay of the Latin teacher was seventy five gold florins, besides board and lodging.

It is only by comparison of the different classes of schools that we can estimate the relative height of the incomes of schoolmasters at that time. The whole annual expenses, from 1451–1452, of a young nobleman at the University of Erfurt, including college fees, clothing, laundry, and board and lodging for himself and private tutor, came only to twenty six florins. A Frankfort student paid, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, ten florins a year for board and lodging in the house of the Freiburg University professor Ulrich Zasius. In the year 1515, when the value of money had considerably fallen, a tun of wine could be bought for nine florins. The salaries of the village schoolmasters in the hamlets of Weeze and Capellen seem very large when compared with the income of the architect of Frankfort Cathedral, which did not exceed from ten to twenty florins a year, or with that of the first chamberlain of the mother of the elector Palatine (Phillipp von der Pfalz), which was thirty florins a year.

"The instructors of youth," says *The Soul's Guide*, "should be as highly honored as the highest of the land, for it is hard work and labor to bring up children in Christian discipline and order. If they do this, you must honor and love and befriend them."

3. Albert Dürer, in some verses appended to one of his woodcuts in 1510, gives us some idea of the nature of this "Christian discipline and order." The picture represents a teacher holding in his right hand a rod, while his left hand rests on an open book. In front of him, on stools, sit several eager-looking boys, each with an inkstand hanging to his belt. In the accompanying rhymes are the following precepts among others: "If thou wilt be clever and wise, pray to God all the days of thy life; if thou wishest to be recompensed, avoid all evil. Prevent others from thinking evil of their neighbor. This frees the heart from all bitterness, drives away all hate and envy, and disposes thy hearers to listen to thee favorably. Say what thou thinkest quietly; hold fast to the truth, lie not, and do not try to appear to men other than thou art."

4. All Christian instruction — such was the ordinance of the Church — should begin in the family; the Christian home should be the child's first place of training. "Children are the hope of the Church," says *The Soul's Guide*, "let parents, therefore, be admonished to see that their children grow up in Christian fear and reverence, and that their home be their first school and their first Church. Christian mother, when thou holdest thy child, which is God's own image, on thy knee, make the sign of the holy cross on his forehead, on his lips and on his heart; and as soon as he can lisp, teach him to say his prayers. Take him betimes to confession, and instruct him in all that is needful to make him confess rightly. Fathers and mothers should set their children a good example, taking them to mass, vespers, and sermons on Sundays and saints' days as often as possible. They should be punished as often as they neglect to do this."

In the thirty seventh chapter of Diedrich Coelde's Catechism, parents are admonished that they should teach their children in the German tongue the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, and the Apostles' Creed, and other matters of faith to be found in this book. "Item: they should further teach them to honor Mary, the Mother of God, and their guardian angel, and all the holy saints. Morning and evening they should give their children the benediction, and make them kneel in thanksgiving to God. Item: they must be taught from their youth up, for when they are older they get 'stiffened,' so that they neither can nor will do what is good. Further, they should be taught to say 'Benedicite' and 'Gratia's' before and after meals; to be temperate in eating and drinking, and to be modest in the streets. Item: they should be clothed simply and unostentatiously, and be taken to mass, to hear vespers, and sermons, and taught how to serve at the mass." Parents are advised "to inspire their children with reverence to their betters, to correct them with moderation, to use the rod when necessary, and to be careful to keep them from bad company." At the beginning of the chapter parents are warned that most of the evil in the world is the result of bad education in the family; that the welfare of their children depends on strict discipline, and that parents who allow their children to follow their own will prepare for themselves a scourge.

5. "The Christian house should be a Christian temple; above all on Sundays and holy days, when father and mother, children, man servant and maid servant, old and young, should join in praising God and reading His word; which, however, need not prevent joyous play and merriment during the rest of the day. On those days especially parents should show their children the practical

aspects of religion through almsgiving, the forgiveness of injuries, and other works of mercy. This would be a good example, which would not be lost."

Johann Nider, in his sermons to parents and children on the Ten Commandments, speaks in the same strain: "Are you so poor that you cannot give a penny to the beggar at the church door? Well, then, give him a Pater Noster, that he may bear his lot with patience. If you see some one belonging to you doing wrong, correct him; if some one does you a wrong, leave it in God's hands — it will redound to your soul's salvation. Christians, after attending mass and hearing sermons on saints' days, should read such books as will tend to their spiritual edification; they may also sing songs about their handiwork or other matters, but not coarse or wicked songs."

Stephen Lanzkrana, provost of the church of St. Dorothea in Vienna (1477), sketches a beautiful picture of the Christian family in the *Road to Heaven*, where he admonishes the father "on Sundays, the first thing after breakfast, to go with his household and hear a sermon, and afterwards to sit at home with his wife, children, and servants, and question them as to what made most impression upon them in the sermon, telling them what struck them most. He should also hear them repeat, and expound to them, the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, the Pater Noster and the Creed. He shall also give them something good to drink, and join joyously in singing the praises of God, of our Lady and the saints with his household." It is further enjoined that on Sunday mornings "all Christians who have come to years of discretion should hear a whole mass, that is, not leave the church until the blessing is given, that they should remain for the sermon and listen to it with attention, and repeat congregationally the Confiteor and the

Commandments. It is also recommended that they should pray for the wants of the Church and the faithful. Whatever in the sermon cannot be remembered without notes should be written down at home."

Thus, then, the education of the home and the school were to coöperate with the preaching of God's word, and other religious instruction imparted by the Church; the Church, the home, and the school mutually supported and furthered each other's ends. . . .

6. A universal principle in religious instruction was that pictures were the books of the illiterate. Hence the religious dramas, mystery plays in which the whole story of the redemption of the world is represented; and the so-called "Bibles of the Poor," which were often produced in frescoes, bas-reliefs, and painted windows. The "Dance of Death" frescoed on cemetery walls, and the "Stations of the Cross" erected, with indulgences attached to the devotion, may be also traced to the same cause. Especially in the latter gart of the fifteenth century we fmd this picture teaching in vogue. The cardinal Nicholas of Cusa seems to have attached great importance to it, for we find that in his constant visitations through all parts of Germany he was in the habit of erecting tablets with the Commandments, the Creed, and portions of the Scriptures engraved on them.

"Such articles of faith as are essential to man," writes Geiler von Kaisersberg, "may be learned by the common people through contemplation of the pictures and stories which are painted everywhere in the churches. These are the Scriptures of the lower classes." In his translation of Gerson's popular three-volume work, *On the Ten Commandments, Confession, and the Art of Dying Well*, the same author says: "Priests, parents, schoolmasters, and hospital superintendents should have pictures

hung up in churches, schools, hospitals, and public places, for they were painted with a special view to the instruction and benefit of the unlearned, who may never have an opportunity of listening to sermons. . . . And above all they were intended for children and young people, who from their infancy should be well instructed in the general principles and the more important points of our religion. . . . Fathers and mothers should in these things prepare their children for the schoolmaster."

"Question your children often," thus does the *Soul's Guide* admonish parents, "as to what they have understood of the Commandments, the Creed, and the explanations they have received in church and at school; thereon depends their salvation and yours. It is not sufficient to know by heart the words of the Commandments, the Creed, the seven deadly sins, and the sacraments; all who have come to years of discretion must also know the meaning of all this doctrine." Lanzkrana speaks even more strongly in the *Road to Heaven.* "It is the bounden duty of every one as soon as he comes to the use of his reason to learn the Commandments of God, not only so as to be able to repeat them word for word as in the text, but so as to understand them and keep them, and to know also what they require him to avoid. In like manner he must know what are the seven capital sins, and in what consists true penance. Also the signification of the Lord's Prayer, and what we are entitled to hope for from God and to pray to Him to grant. In such manner should all fathers and mothers instruct their children, all teachers their pupils, all superiors their inferiors, according to their position."

"Parents and schoolmasters," writes the Lutheran Mathesius, in allusion to the days of his youth, "were accustomed to teach their children the Commandments,

the Creed, and the Pater Noster. I learned them myself in my childhood, and, according to the school custom of the time, often rehearsed them to other children." The Saxon Prince Johann Friedrich, afterwards Elector of Saxony, when a boy of eight or nine, used often to beg his father to allow him to go to catechism with the children of the town of Torgau, "for it amused his youthful Highness to hear one child teaching and catechizing another."

7. The oldest regular catechism known to us is that called the *Mirror of the Christian* — drawn up by the great popular preacher Diedrich Coelde, a Friar Minor of Munster, in Westphalia. It was first published in Low German in the year 1470, and was gradually brought out and disseminated in other editions. It is so simple, intelligible, and forcible that it could be used now with as much profit as four hundred years ago. The one leading thought from beginning to end is, "Jesus my all! All for Jesus!" After an exposition of the general principles of the faith, he deals with the Apostles' Creed, the two great commandments of love of God and of our neighbor, the Decalogue, and the five commandments of the Church.

"Seeing that faith is the foundation of virtue and the beginning of human holiness" (such are the opening words) "it is necessary and profitable to repeat our Creed daily with our lips and to meditate on it in our hearts. And not only are we bound to believe the twelve articles of the Apostles' Creed, but also that which is revealed to us in the Scriptures and commanded by the Church." On the First Commandment he adds the following commentary: "Man must place all his faith, all his hope, and all his love on God alone, and on no creature besides. It is a sin against the First Com-

mandment to place our faith or hope or love more in the saints than in God."

In connection with the Commandments he deals seriatim with all the different kinds of sin — the seven capital sins, the sins against the Holy Ghost, and so forth. Then follow instructions on forgiveness of sin, contrition, confession, and satisfaction; on the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy, and so on. Specially beautiful are the passages on prayer, on the devout hearing of mass, and on Christian sanctification of the whole day. The duties of the different stations of life are clearly laid down.

The passage on the preparation for death is very touching, telling how man should trust in nothing else but the merits of Jesus Christ, through whose "hard expiation" alone our repentance has any merit. The book being a manual of prayer as well as a catechism, it is interspersed with ejaculatory prayers for the sick and dying, which they can either utter for themselves or have read to them. It is also enjoined that the narratives of Our Lord's Passion be read to them.

8. All the manuals of instruction, prayer books, and sermons of the period were of the same character. In a commentary on the Ten Commandments, published in 1515, we read: "Man cannot be saved by himself alone, and must not expect salvation from his own merits, as it is earned alone through Jesus Christ, who will judge us not according to our deserts, but rather through His own mercy. We must fly for refuge to the loving heart of Jesus. The Father will not turn from us when we arrive at the kingdom where there are many mansions." "Every Christian," says Albrecht von Eyb, in his *Guide to Christian Perfection*, "should thus address God: 'I cannot redeem myself through my own works, but do thou, O God, redeem and sanctify me and have mercy

on me. I trust not in myself, but in thy divine mercy. Thou alone art my hope, and against thee have I sinned. Thou didst love me enough to die for me; let me not be lost.' "

The faithful are taught to invoke the Blessed Virgin in the following words: "Queen of Heaven, Mother of Mercy, Refuge of Sinners, reconcile me to thy Son, and beg Him to be merciful to me, an unworthy sinner."

In a pastoral address issued by Surgant in 1503 priests are enjoined to comfort and exhort the sick in the following manner: "Our dear Lord Jesus suffered and died on the tree of the cross for you, for He wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live. Therefore you should not despair of the mercy of God, but place all your hope in Him. Bear your illness patiently and let your small sufferings be lost in the great pain and Passion of Christ. Fear not, but trust in the protection of the Cross in all your necessities. Pray to the glorious Virgin Mother of God and to the saints and angels to stay by you in your last end and conduct you to eternal life."

Ulrich Krafft says, in his *Spiritual Combat*, published in 1503: "I know that we have a good God, and I wish to die confiding in His mercy, not in my own works." Nowhere, however, do we find the doctrine of the salvation of man depending on the merits of Christ more strongly insisted upon than in the book entitled *The Treasure of the Soul*, which appeared in 1491. "Our strength and safety, our weapon and victory," says the author, "depend on our faith. If it be strong in us, then we are strong against the enemy; if, however, we are weak in faith, which God forbid, we lose our defense and are in danger. So long as our faith is unshaken, our enemy has no power." Therefore, let him who is determined to overcome stand fast by the faith.

9. *The Soul's Guide* is particularly explicit in its instructions on the sacraments and on the veneration of the saints: "Know, brethren, that the Church has always taught that the intercession of the saints is very profitable for all who desire to obtain salvation. Call upon them to obtain for you that which is pleasing to God and good for you. But be careful that you pray aright, placing your confidence in God above all. Thus only will your prayer be acceptable. . . . The Church triumphant prays for the Church militant. . . . for in heaven they have even more charity than when on earth. On earth they prayed for the living and the dead; after death they still pray for those on earth and those in purgatory. He who denies this is guilty of the heresy that the saints cannot intercede for us. . . . The holy saints can help by their prayers and merits to have our petitions granted; therefore our prayers are actually addressed only to God. The Church does not say, 'Christ, pray for us.' "

The Church doctrine of indulgences was laid down with equal clearness. "An indulgence," says Geiler of Kaisersberg, "is the remission of a debt. But what debt? Not mortal sin, for freedom from this is necessary before an indulgence can be obtained. Not the eternal punishment of sin, for in hell there is no forgiveness. . . . It is the temporal punishment due after the eternal has, through repentance and confession, been forgiven." "Know," says *The Soul's Guide*, "that an indulgence does not forgive sin, but only the temporal punishment still due to it. Know that you cannot obtain an indulgence while you are in sin and before you have repented, confessed, and resolved sincerely to amend. God is merciful, and has given his Church the power of forgiving sin, as also a treasure of graces, but not for those who have

only a superficial sorrow, fancying that they can gain heaven by outward acts."

In answer to those who accuse the Church of venality in selling indulgences, the *Explanation of the Articles of the Church* says: "The Church does not wish to amass riches, but to work for the honor of God and the salvation of souls. Not all those who help to build churches gain indulgences; only those, who, being free from mortal sin and having a firm confidence in the mercy of God, give alms in the spirit of faith and veneration of the saints, in whose honor the churches are built."

10. Another catechetical handbook, which was also a manual of devotion, was published (1474–1491), in different dialects and different places — at Augsburg, Cologne, Utrecht, Haarlem, Zwolle, and elsewhere — and is the most beautiful prose work of the century. "I intend," says its unknown author, "to write a book in the German language, out of the Holy Scriptures, for the honor of God and the benefit of my fellow Christians; it will contain flowers culled by many hands, and it shall be called *Consolation for the Soul.* Therein I shall write about the Ten Commandments, the Holy Sacraments, the eight Beatitudes, the six works of mercy, the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, the seven deadly sins, the seven cardinal virtues, and all else with which God shall inspire me. What does not seem like truth, that I shall set aside, and I shall choose that which is altogether best, and which is profitable and comforting, as a physician seeks out useful plants for his medicines, and as a dove picks out the best grain to eat. I beg those who read this book to pray for me, that together we may all arrive where we shall find eternal salvation. May the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost help us to gain it!" The explanations of the different commandments are supplemented and illus-

trated by anecdotes of all sorts, told with rare pathos and beauty.

As the utmost importance was attached to worthy preparation for receiving the sacraments of penance and the eucharist, most of the catechetical writings appeared in the form of manuals of confession and treatises on the Ten Commandments, on the various kinds of sins, and on preparation for the Holy Communion.

Conspicuous among such works is the *Confession Book* which Johannes Wolf, chaplain of St. Peter's, Frankfort-on-the-Main, prepared for the press in the year 1473. It begins with an admirable preface for children about to make their first confession, and then proceeds with catechetical instruction on faith, hope, and love, based on the Ten Commandments. With regard to the images of the saints it says: "We must honor them, not for themselves, but as reminders of what they represent, in the same manner as the Church does; otherwise it would be idolatry."

The Light of the Soul, a book which appeared in Lubeck in 1484, says: "Penance saves the soul from hell; whoever dies in a state of deadly sin without sorrow and penance will be lost eternally, though he should have converted heathens and infidels, built hospitals, churches, convents, yea, suffered martyrdom. A thousand thousand masses and fasts could not save him — no, not the prayers of all the saints and angels, even of the Mother of God, though continued through all time, can avail him."

Great store was also set on the explanation of the Lord's Prayer, and several German expositions of the holy mass were also put into the hands of the people. From year to year the number of books of religious instruction and of lives of the saints increased.

"Both to the learned and the unlearned," wrote the church reformer John Busch, "it is very beneficial to possess and to read daily German books of devotion on virtues and vices; on the Incarnation; on the lives and martyrdom of the Apostles, confessors, and virgins; on the humility and virtues of the saints; for they incite us to improve our own lives and to watch over our conduct, and they inspire us with love of the heavenly fatherland, they beget in us the fear of hell and the desire of heaven."

11. Among all these religious publications, the "Plenaries," or German *Handpostillen*, deserve special consideration. As many as 102 different compilations and editions of these appeared between about 1470 and 1520. They contained the Epistles and Gospels of the ecclesiastical year, with expositions of the Gospels. A further development was printing the German text of portions of the mass services for all the Sundays and holy days, accompanied by commentaries and illustrations calculated to enforce their meaning. Had no other books of instruction been preserved from those times, these "Plenaries" alone would afford proof that more was done for the religious instruction of the people in those days than at any other time before or since. In the main they are decidedly superior to similar publications of the present day, and many of them may in parts rank with the best German prose works.

From all these books, which were intended for the general use of the people, we see how children and grown-up people were instructed in the highest truths of religion and trained and helped to lead thoroughly Christian lives. Nowhere do we find "salvation by works alone," idolatrous worship of the saints, or abuse of indulgences inculcated. It is true that throughout the narratives

which occur in the books of devotion, and in the German legends of the saints, there is a vein of superstition which often borders on the childish; but through the dross there shines the pure gold of faith in an Almighty Power which protects the pious, rewards the virtuous, and, in justice, punishes the wicked. "There is no need," says *The Soul's Guide*, "to believe all the wonders we read of in pious books." The miracles of the Scriptures are miracles indeed, and there are many other credible ones which the holy saints worked through the power of God. But many are only related as examples, and to set forth the majesty of God, who rewards the good and punishes the wicked.

In all the religious books approved and used by the Church we find the pure, orthodox, unadulterated doctrine of salvation; and all are pervaded by an undertone of feeling which is best expressed in the words of a *Help of Preparing for the Holy Communion*, published in Basle: "Enter into the depths of thine own heart; there find thy Jesus and bury thyself in His sacred wounds. Banish all confidence in thy own merits, for all salvation comes from the cross of Christ, in whom place thy hope."

12. The number of translations both of single books of the Old and New Testaments, as well as of the complete Bible, was indeed very great. We have evidence of twenty-two editions of the Psalms with German translations up to 1509, and of twenty-five German versions of the Gospels and Epistles up to 1518. Between this period and the separation of the churches at least fourteen complete editions of the Bible were published in High German, and five in the Low German dialect. The first High German edition was brought out in 1466 by Johann Mendel, of Strasburg; then followed one Strasburg edition in 1470, two of Augsburg, in 1473, an edition entirely

in the Swiss dialect in 1474, two more Augsburg editions in 1477 and another in 1480, one Nuremberg edition in 1483, another of Strasburg in 1485, and four more of Augsburg respectively in 1487, 1490, 1507, and 1518. By the beginning of the sixteenth century a sort of German Vulgate had crystalized into shape.

Like the German catechisms and manuals of devotion generally, these Bibles were illustrated with numerous woodcuts, in order, as the publisher of the Cologne Bible expressed it, "that the people might be the more readily induced to a diligent study of Holy Writ." We have a mass of evidence to show that this was the prevailing motive in this extensive multiplication of copies of the Scriptures. The compiler of the Basle *Gospel Book* (1514), for instance, speaks as follows in urging the necessity of reading and studying the Bible: "We shall have to render a strict account to God of all our time; the present, which is called the time of grace, is precious beyond measure to all devout souls. Therefore it is recommended to all to read the Scriptures, in order to attain to a knowledge of God, our Creator and Lord; for the grace which man may obtain from God through reading or hearing the Holy Scriptures is without limit, if so be that we act up to what we know. As the holy Apostle St. James says in the fourth chapter of his Epistle: 'To him, therefore, who knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is a sin.' " The author then enumerates the various benefits which follow from reading or hearing the Holy Scriptures, and goes on to say: "There is no trial or affliction, however great, for which, if we read the Holy Scriptures, and take them truly to heart, and put our trust in God, we shall fail to be comforted by the grace of the Holy Spirit. He who is without faith is without help and grace; while the strong in faith find

comfort and assistance and much grace. . . . Among the readers of the Bible we may distinguish five separate classes. First, those who read to know but not to do — rather that they may reprove others; this is spiritual pride. Secondly, those who read in order to be considered learned. Thirdly, those who read with a view to personal gain, which is base and mercenary. Fourthly, those who study and read in order to instruct others in the will of God, and to better their lives, which is true charity. Fifthly, and lastly, those who use all their efforts to learn that which is true wisdom. To the last two classes the study of the Sacred Scriptures is profitable, for they are not actuated by pride or hypocrisy."

13. The publisher of the Cologne Bible writes also very beautifully on the reading of this holy book. "All Christians," he says, "should read the Bible with piety and reverence, praying the Holy Ghost, who is the inspirer of the Scriptures, to enable them to understand them and to make them profitable to them for the salvation of their souls." "The learned," he continues, "should make use of the Latin translation of St. Jerome; but the unlearned and simple folk, whether laymen or clergy, monks and nuns especially, in order to avoid the danger of idleness, which is the root of all evil, should read the German translations now supplied and thus arm themselves against the enemy of our salvation. With this object in view, one who is a lover of human holiness did, out of a good heart and at great cost and no sparing of labor, cause to be printed in Cologne, between the years 1470 and 1480, a translation of the Holy Scriptures, which had been made many years before and used in manuscript copies in monasteries and convents." "All, however," he adds, "who read the Bible in German should do it with humility, leaving unjudged what they

cannot understand — in short, accepting it according to the interpretation which the Roman Catholic Church has spread over the world."

14. In a little book entitled *Useful and Consoling*, published in 1508, we read: "Let all who read the Scriptures pray as follows: 'O Lord Jesus, enlighten my mind, that I may understand thy word and be led thereby to repentance and piety. Grant that my reading of the Holy Scriptures may advance me in the spirit of prayer and meditation. Blessed, O Lord, is the man whom they teach. . . . Lord Jesus, teach me to understand what I read, and to put it in practice.' "

The *Blessed Garden* (1509) teaches in the same spirit: "On Sundays and holy days you should read the Holy Scriptures, particularly the Gospels and Epistles, with attention and earnestness. But remember that you cannot do so with profit unless you first pray for the light of the Holy Spirit. You should also excite yourself to contrition, as if you were preparing for confession. If you read the Scriptures in a spirit of pride, it will be harmful to you. What you do not understand refer to the Church; she expounds all things aright, and alone has the gift of interpretation."

The rapidity with which the different editions followed each other and the testimony of contemporary writers point to a wide distribution of German Bibles among the people. John Eck tells us that he had read nearly the whole Bible by the time he was ten years old. Adam Potken, chaplain of Santen, was made to learn the four Evangelists by heart when he was a boy, between 1470 and 1480; and afterwards he was in the habit of reading passages daily from the Old and New Testaments with his pupils of eleven and twelve years old. With such zeal was the study of the Bible pursued in the fifteenth century

that we find a Canon of Cassel in the year 1480 founding an endowment to enable a student from the village of Harmuthsachsen, near Eschwege, to devote eight years to this study alone.

CHAPTER XVII

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN EUROPE PRIOR TO THE REFORMATION — *Continued*

Social, Economic, and Religious Life in England Before the Reformation [1]

1. "Strange Problems." 2. Effects of the Black Death. 3. Loss to the Church. 4. Extent of the evil among the laboring classes. 5. Further losses to religion. 6. Wars of the Roses. 7. General condition of the people. 8. Clergy and bishops not prepared to cope with the forces of revolution. 9. Abuse of "pluralities" and nonresidence of bishops. 10. *Supplication of Beggars* by Simon Fish. 11. People well affected towards the monks. 12. False charges against the monasteries. 13. True condition of religious houses.

1. No just appreciation of the great social and religious revolution of the sixteenth century is possible without some knowledge of the causes which produced it. "The history of the Reformation in England," writes Lord Macaulay, "is full of strange problems." That the nation, at the bidding of the Sovereign, and in furtherance of his whims, should acquiesce in the rejection of papal supremacy over the Church, should substitute the doctrine of the spiritual headship of the King, and should tolerate the national upheaval and disregard of the rights of property implied in the dissolution of monasteries and

[1] *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, by Francis Aidan Gasquet. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

confiscation of their lands and goods, are "problems" to be solved only by an acquaintance with the events preceding and accompanying them.

2. Circumstances combined to collect in the political and social atmosphere of England in the time of Henry VIII, elements fraught with dangerous and destructive power against the Church. In the first place, it would seem to be certain that the country had not recovered from that terrible visitation, known as the "Black Death," which devastated Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century. Although a hundred and fifty years had elapsed before Henry VIII mounted the throne, so great had been the ravages of the scourge and so unsettled the interval, that the nation was still suffering from the effects of the great sickness. It could hardly have been otherwise, when in one year, 1348–9, about half of the entire population was swept away. In Norwich city alone 57,304 people "besides religious and beggars," are said by the chronicler of the time to have died; in the little town of Bodmin more than 1,500 were buried in a few months.

3. Among the clergy the mortality was quite as heavy. In the diocese of Norwich during a single twelve month there are recorded the institution of 863 incumbents to livings vacated by the death of the previous occupant, "the clergy dying so fast that they were obliged to admit numbers of youths that had only devoted themselves for clerks by being shaven to be rectors of parishes." In the County of Norfolk, out of 799 priests 527 died of the plague; and William Bateman, the bishop, applied for and obtained from Pope Clement VI, a bull allowing him to dispense with sixty clerks, who were only 21 years of age, "though only shavelings," and to allow them to hold rectories, as 1,000 livings had been rendered vacant by death, as otherwise service would cease altogether.

In the West Riding of Yorkshire, to take another instance, 96 priests out of 141 died; in the East Riding, out of 95, only 35 survived; and altogether it has been computed that about two-thirds of the clergy of England were carried off by the sickness.

The monastic orders suffered with, perhaps, more severity, because the mortality was greater where numbers were gathered together. William of Worcester records in the Register of Friars Minor at Bodmin a statement that in the general chapter, held in 1351, at Lyons, it was computed the order had lost through the sickness 13,883 members in Europe. Writing of the Diocese of Winchester at this time, a local antiquarian authority says: "We have no means of ascertaining the actual havoc occasioned among the religious houses of this diocese, or the number of clergy who perished; but in the hospital of Sandown in Surrey there existed not a single survivor; and of other religious houses in the diocese (which comprises only two counties) there perished no fewer than 28 superiors — abbots, abbesses, and priors — and nearly 350 rectors and vicars of the several parish churches."

Stowe states that in his time there was a tablet at the Charterhouse, London, to commemorate the fact that in the crypt and adjoining burying-ground 50,000 bodies were interred during the twelve months. From Candlemas to Easter 200 interments are said to have taken place each day. Three archbishops of Canterbury in one year were enthroned, only to be carried to the tomb. In the abbey of Croxton, in Lincolnshire, all the monks except the abbot and prior were swept off by the sickness; and at Westminster abbey, the abbot and 26 of his community were committed to a common grave in the southern cloister. Lastly, to give but one more

instance, in the abbey of Meaux, out of 50 monks and 10 novices, 40 monks and all the novices died.

4. The effect of this vast depopulation was felt for many succeeding generations. According to Knighton's *Chronicle* there existed such distress and such a universal "loosening of the bonds of society" as is "only to be found," says Mason, "in the description of earthquakes in South America"; whole villages died out, cities shrunk within their walls, and the houses becoming unoccupied fell into ruins. The agricultural population suffered as severely as that of the towns, and the land fell out of cultivation on account of the difficulty of securing laborers, except at enormous wages. Flocks were attacked by disease and perished from want of herdsmen to watch them; the corn crops, which were unusually rich in the year 1348, rotted on the ground, as no harvestmen were to be found to reap them. The monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury, even with its rich endowments, felt the pinch of poverty. In asking from the bishop of Rochester the impropriation of the church of Westerham "to help them to keep up their old hospitality," they plead excessive poverty caused by "the great pestilence affecting man and beast." In furtherance of their suit they forward the bishop a list of their losses in cattle, which amount to 257 oxen, 511 cows with their calves, and 4,585 sheep, estimated to be worth in money £792, 12*s.* 6*d.*, or more than $16,000 of our money. Nor is this all, for they declare that 1,212 acres of land formerly profitable to them had been rendered useless by an inundation of the sea, from the impossibility of getting laborers to maintain the sea walls.

Such a state of things, universal throughout the whole of England, produced a crisis between the laborers and their employers, and led to a revolution in the system of

farming. The nobles and monasteries were no longer able to manage their estates on the old principles; permanent retainers attached to the soil disappeared, and the modern system of letting was introduced. This had far-reaching results. The peasant proprietor became the exception, the population was detached from the soil, and was no longer bound to the lords of the land by the old ties. Gradually, but certainly, this led to the destruction of the power of the nobles and the exaltation of that of the Sovereign, until in the days of Henry VIII, the king of England was practically despotic.

That the country had not recovered from the effects of the scourge by the sixteenth century can be clearly shown. The statutes of the early years of Henry's reign, for the rebuilding of towns and the repair of the streets and houses, show that the result was still visible, and that the scarcity of houses was beginning to be felt. The Venetian ambassadors, who describe the ruined streets and vacant places in the English towns, and the thinness of the population throughout the country, speak of the effects of the cause which had existed a century and a half before.

5. To the Church the scourge of 1349 must have been little less than disastrous. Apart from the poverty and distress occasioned by the unoccupied lands, and the consequent diminution of tithes, the sudden removal of the great majority of the clergy must have broken the continuity of the best traditions of ecclesiastical usage and teaching. Moreover, the necessity which obliged the Bishops to institute young and inexperienced, if not positively uneducated clerics, to the vacant livings, must have had its effects upon many succeeding generations. The monastic houses also sadly suffered, not only in the destruction of their chief source of income by the depre-

ciated value of their lands, and the want of cultivation consequent upon the impossibility of finding laborers in place of the tenants swept off by the pestilence, but more than all by reason of the great diminution of their numbers, which rendered the proper performance of their religious duties, and the diligent discharge of their obligations, as regards monastic discipline, difficult, and often almost impossible. In numbers, and there can be little doubt also in tone, the various religious bodies had not recovered the ground lost during the year of the Black Death by the time of their ultimate dissolution.

6. The long and bitter feud between the Houses of York and Lancaster must likewise be regarded as an important element in the chain of events which rendered possible the political and social changes of Henry's reign. From the year 1452, when the Duke of York first took up arms to secure the removal of his enemies from the counsels of Henry VI, to the battle of Tewksbury in 1471, England had been the theater of constant and terrible civil strife. For ten years, from the accession of Edward IV to Tewkesbury, there had hardly been any cessation of hostilities; and it was not till the battle of Stoke, in 1487, which finally settled Henry VII on the throne, that the Wars of the Roses, after lasting thirty-five years, ended.

The insecurity and instability of well-nigh half a century, as well as the brutal ferocity of the long-continued contest, must have stamped a peculiar character upon the men of the early Tudor period. When Henry VIII succeeded his father, every man of thirty must have had some knowledge of the terrible war within his own personal recollection, whilst his parents must have lived through the whole of it. "The Earl of Oxford, one of the few active leaders who survived the war, was still alive.

The earl of Surrey, who fought for Richard at Bosworth, was born some time before the beginning of the civil wars, and died just before Henry's first divorce. When that great question was first agitated, every man of seventy had been born in the very year that the first blood was shed, was six years old when Edward IV was declared King, and sixteen when Henry VI was murdered in the Tower, and his son, prince Edward, at Tewkesbury."

The obvious result of a knowledge of the danger and troubles of this long civil war, whether derived from personal experience or the relation of parents, was a willingness to hazard everything rather than recur to such a period of distress and bloodshed. Periods of revolution inspire peculiar prudence, and protracted war a determination to cling "to peace and pursue it." Hence the population generally throughout England in the days of Henry had been rendered by circumstances long-suffering, and ready to endure the dictates of his whims and desires rather than to imperil their peace by resistance. . . .

7. The general condition of the people is represented by all writers of the period to have been very miserable. A very large proportion of the population had been connected with agricultural pursuits. In Henry's time the introduction of a novel system of farming, which dispensed with the greater portion of the laborers formerly required to cultivate the soil, caused great distress. The dearth of population, a result of the great sicknesses and the civil wars, had originally thrown much of the land out of use, and had impoverished the landowners and notably the monasteries to a great and alarming extent. The demand for wool, which largely increased in the sixteenth century, as well as the difficulty of procuring labor, had no doubt originally suggested the possibility of turning much of the old tillage land into grass for sheep runs.

It has been already pointed out that the change in the feudal tenure of land no longer attached people to the soil, and the tenants being no longer regarded as retainers of their lord, ceased to be of paramount interest to him to keep them upon his estates. As they ceased to be a source of strength, they were felt to be burdensome. Pleasure and profit, the former by the multiplication of animals for the chase, the latter by the breeding of oxen and sheep, were better served by expelling the small tenant farming population and throwing the land into large enclosed grazing farms.

Complaints of the hardships caused to the rural population by this process of "emparkment" were numerous and urgent. In 1514, a petition was presented to Henry VIII to beg him to remedy the state of things brought about by the action of the great landowners in throwing many small farms into one large one, and by the consequent neglect of tillage. The petition states that many gentlemen, merchant adventurers, clothmakers, and others have occupied ten, twelve, and even sixteen farms. By reason of this, it says, the whole villages of twenty and thirty houses have been cleared of their inhabitants, and a solitary shepherd was employed on land which had hitherto provided occupation for sixty or eighty persons. The various statutes of Henry's reign against "enclosures," etc., show how acute must have been the distress occasioned by the change of land tenure. Coverdale speaks of the multitude of poor who go about the country begging, and St. Thomas More, in his *Utopia*, which, according to the opinion of Mr. Brewer, gives the best account of the real condition of the people, paints a very sad picture of the times. "In whatsoever parts of the country [he writes] the wool is finer and consequently more valuable, there the nobility and gentry and some

abbots, holy men as they were, not content with the yearly rents and profits of their lands, which their ancestors enjoyed, nor reckoning it sufficient that living in ease and plenty they did no good, but rather harm, to the public, left nothing for the plough, but laid all down to pasture, demolished houses, destroyed whole towns, leaving only the church standing to fold their sheep in. So that as an unsatiable glutton, and a direful plague of the country, the fields being laid all in one, some thousands of acres were fenced with only one hedge. The farmers with their families were ejected; they were dispossessed by being either over-reached by fraud or overcome by violence, or else, being quite wearied out with abuses, were forced to sell what they had; and so the poor wretches were obliged, at any rate, to shift their quarters, men and women, husbands and wives, orphans and widows, parents and their children."

8. In the midst of the throes of a great social crisis much depended upon the Church. There can be little doubt that the clergy of the time were ill-fitted to cope with the forces of revolution, to calm the restless spirit of the age, or resist the rising tide of novelties. Their very character was in itself out of joint with the times. In the days when might was right, and the force of arms the ruling power of the world, the occupation of peace, to which the clergy were bound by their sacred calling, roused hostile and violent opposition from the party rising into power. The bishops were, with some honorable exceptions, mere court officials pensioned out of ecclesiastical revenues. Holding their high offices by royal favor rather than on account of special aptitude to look after the spiritual welfare of their dioceses, they appear, perhaps not unnaturally, to have had little heart in their work. Too frequently, also, the holding of a see

was regarded as a temporary position, and as an earnest of appointment to another, pecuniarily or socially, more advantageous. Thus, looking to obtain future favors, a bishop's energies were often directed to obtain promised or expected preferment, rather than to the management of his present district. This place-seeking kept the lords spiritual much at court, that they might gain or maintain sufficient influence to support their claims to further promotion. They looked to the king, not to the Church, and regarded the temporal adjuncts of prosperity and power rather than the spiritual duties and obligations of the episcopal office.

Too often, also, the bishop of an important see would be occupied in the management of the secular affairs of state. Perhaps, even, he was paid for these services by the emoluments of his ecclesiastical office. To the king all looked for hope of reward, and to royalty all clung as long as there remained any prospect of success. The Church had few favors to give except at the wish and by the hands of the king. "Even Cardinals' hats were bestowed only on Royal recommendation." The episcopal see was, moreover, not unfrequently, looked upon as a property conferred for political services and out of which the most, in a temporal point of view, was to be made. The higher spiritual and pastoral duties were often forgotten when a bishopric was sought or retained by one having no higher ideal than that of temporal advantage. Only when declining years made the struggle for position less possible, or when failure to please made absence from court advisable, did the bishop too often come to spend his remaining years in his diocese, and devote his expiring energies to his flock. The worship of wealth and influence, the struggle after power and position, in which too many churchmen joined, and the employment of energy

which should have been devoted to purposes ecclesiastical upon the secular business of state, were constantly at work, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, sapping the very life of the Church.

9. No less detrimental to the well-being of the Church in England at this time was the crying abuse and scandal of pluralities. The holding of many livings by one man was no new grievance. At the end of the thirteenth century, according to archbishop Winchelsea's register, there were some that had fifteen, others thirteen, while one held no fewer than twenty-three benefices. The twenty-three clergymen given in the list held an average of eight livings each. In the sixteenth century there was still grave cause of complaint, some priests having as many as ten or twelve benefices and very possibly residents on none, while there were "plenty of learned men in the universities" for whom no preferment could be found. Cardinal Wolsey himself set the example. He held not only a plurality of livings, but was bishop of more than one see, whilst he farmed others. He also obtained the abbey of St. Albans. Although the Parliament of 1529 especially legislated against this abuse, the exceptions were so numerous as to make the Act ridiculous and nugatory. Every spiritual man of the king's council, for example, was allowed to keep three livings; every chaplain of the queen or royal family two each; archbishops and dukes might keep six chaplains; each marquis and earl five, and every chaplain might hold two benefices. The same privilege was extended to every doctor of divinity and to so many others that the holding of more than one benefice could hardly be called an exception. At this time also benefices were bestowed upon the young of good family, who had sufficient influence to secure these preferments. Thus, for example, Reginald

Pole, the future Cardinal, when only seventeen was nominated to the prebendal stall of Roscombe, and two years later to Gatcombe Secunda, both in the Salisbury diocese. At eighteen he received the deanery of Wimborne Minster.

The non-residence of bishops in their dioceses was a fruitful source of evil. The episcopal functions were very generally relegated to suffragans, who instead of being assistants became practically substitutes for their principals in all the spiritual work of a diocese. Not unfrequently, these suffragans were bishops of Irish sees, who resided in England to the neglect of their own charge, and undertook the supervision of more than one diocese. Upon such auxiliaries rectories or other ecclesiastical preferments were bestowed in lieu of payment for their services, and these in turn were left to the care of ill-paid curates. Neglect of duty more or less extended to the entire body of the clergy, who deprived of proper oversight and paternal guidance, quickly followed the example of non-residence set by their superiors. The result was lamentable so far as the care and instruction of the people was concerned. By law the clergy were appointed to preach in their parishes at least four times in the year, but even from this minimized obligation exemptions were frequent, all chaplains and graduates of the university having an immunity. The successor of Wolsey in the archiepiscopal see of York, Dr. Edward Lee, reports that in the whole of his diocese he could find only twelve of the parochial clergy able and willing to preach to their people.

For many successive years, for example, the diocese of Bath and Wells knew its bishops more by report than personal contact. From the death of bishop Beckington in 1464, the work of the see had been almost invariably

carried on by commissioners and suffragans. It had the ill-fortune to fall into the hands of some too busily engaged in the king's matters to attend to the spiritual wants of their diocese; it had been held by a foreigner, and then farmed by Wolsey. From neglect and its remaining long unoccupied and unfurnished, the very episcopal palace at Wells had fallen into utter ruin and decay. Richard Fox, one of the bishops, was an excellent example in that age; yet what can be said in his defence, when his episcopal duties sat so lightly upon his conscience that though he was consecrated as bishop of Exeter in 1487, removed to Bath and Wells in 1491, and translated to Durham in December, 1494, he yet never saw his cathedral at Exeter nor set foot in his diocese of Bath and Wells.

The occupation of the bishops in affairs of state, besides its disastrous effect on the clergy, had another result. By it a jealous opposition to ecclesiastics was created in the minds of the new nobility. The lay lords and hungry officials not unnaturally looked with dislike upon this employment of ecclesiastics in secular concerns. The occupation of clerics in all the intrigues of party politics, and in the wiles of foreign and domestic diplomacy, conduced to keep them out of coveted preferment. Hence when occasion offered they did not need much inducement to turn against the clergy and enable Henry to carry out his coercive legislation against the Church. . . .

10. The most celebrated and perhaps most dangerous attack against the religious orders made in the early sixteenth century was in the *Supplication of Beggars*, written by one Simon Fish. It was answered by Sir Thomas More, step by step, in his *Supplication of Poor Souls;* but, like all such stories, the answer probably

reached only a few of those who had accepted the wild statements of Fish's fables. Although aimed chiefly against the mendicant friars, the *Supplication of Beggars* involved in one sweeping condemnation the whole of the spirituality, described as "bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, and archdeacons, suffragans, priests, monks, canons, friars, pardoners, and summoners." This curious collection of personages was declared by the writer to have got into their hands more than a third part of the realm, and this estimate of the wealth of the Church was constantly quoted and accepted by subsequent authors. The value of the computation may, however, be judged by the fact that it is based on the assertion that there were in England at the time fifty-two thousand parish churches. Upon this statement Sir Thomas More remarks: "That is one plain lie to begin with." Not contented with the estimate, the author goes on to assert that the Church really has nearer one-half than a third of the entire wealth of the realm. It is only one step further to declare, as he does in the next sentence, that it has this half. Then, with natural indignation, he asks why the spiritual portion of the population, who are to the laity only in the ratio of one to four hundred, should thus have half of the riches of the country?

A still more wonderful calculation was made by Simon Fish as to the amount collected by the mendicant friars each year. He starts with his old premise of the fifty-two thousand parishes, and counts an average of ten households in each. These, he considers, would every one contribute a penny each quarter to every one of the five orders of friars. By a simple process of multiplication he thus obtains no less a sum than £436,333 6*s.* 8*d.* contributed yearly to the begging friars in England. According to such a calculation, these orders obtained by beg-

ging twice as much as the entire revenues of all the monasteries, and more than the whole yearly income of the Church of England, which, according to the Valor Ecclesiasticus of Henry VIII, was only £320,280 10*s*.

11. Still, even these and similar falsehoods, without appealing to the cupidity of the people, do not seem to have alienated from the monks the affections of the general population. The insurrections in their favor is an indication of the opinion of the people themselves, in spite of all that had been said and written against them. Henry Brinklow, a mendicant friar who had thrown off his frock, and was therefore on two accounts little likely to favor the monasteries, bears testimony to the way in which they discharged their duties to the people. "And when they," he writes, "had gifts of any (churches) not impropriated, they gave them unto their friends, of which always some were learned; for the monks found of their friends children at school. And though they were not learned, yet they kept hospitality, and helped their poor friends. And if the parsonages were impropriated, the monks were bound to deal alms to the poor, and to keep hospitality, as the writings of the gifts of such parsonages and lands do plainly declare. And as touching the alms that they dealt, and the hospitality that they kept, every man knoweth that many thousands were well relieved of them, and might have been better if they had not had so many great men's horses to feed, and had not been overcharged with such idle gentlemen as were never out of the abbeys. And if they had any vicarage in their hands they set in sometimes some sufficient vicar (though it were but seldom) to preach and to teach."

He goes on to say that the land was given to the monastic houses for education, hospitality, and to give alms to the poor, and that they were pulled down on the

"pretence" of amending what was amiss. "But see," he continues, "how much that was amiss is amended, for all the godly pretence. It is amended, even as the devil amended his dame's leg (as it is in the proverb): when he should have set it right he broke it quite in pieces. The monks gave too little alms, but now, where £20 was given yearly to the poor in more than a hundred places in England, is not one meal's meat given. This is fair amendment."

12. Into the general state of moral discipline to be found within the monasteries of England at the beginning of the sixteenth century it will be necessary to examine more particularly in considering the charges brought against them to justify their dissolution. It may, however, be here stated that the most authentic evidence upon the subject is to be found in the episcopal registers of the various dioceses. These contain records, more or less minute, of the visitations made by the Bishops to the monasteries within the limits of their special jurisdiction. Their injunctions and other acts prove the care with which the duty of supervision was exercised. Many monasteries, and even orders, were, of course, altogether exempted from episcopal control; but such exemptions were by no means as common as is generally stated. There is no reason whatever to suppose that the condition of the exempt religious was in any way worse than the rest. On the contrary, they were, as a rule, the larger monastic houses which enjoyed the privilege, and in these, as the preamble of the Act of Parliament which suppressed the lesser houses expressly declares, "thanks be to God religion is right well kept." It is not too much, therefore, to regard the evidence furnished in the pages of these episcopal registers as giving a faithful picture of the state of the religious houses. It is certainly very

different from that which Cromwell's agents have drawn, and which has been traditionally regarded as trustworthy by subsequent generations of Englishmen. The acts of many of these visitations are still preserved to us. They prove conclusively the extreme care taken by the bishops in the examination of the individual members of a community, and in the correction of such faults as they were thus enabled to discover. "They" (the bishops), writes Dr. Oliver, "appear to have considered this as a duty of primary importance; in fact, the attention which they paid to this point contributed above all other things to support regular discipline and to prevent licentiousness."

From a careful study of the records of the diocese of Exeter the same learned authority is able to state positively that the "grosser immoralities were far from common" in the conventual establishments of that diocese. This view will be endorsed by all those who may take the trouble to examine into this source of authentic information. The graver irregularities which are recorded against the religious after the most searching scrutiny, made by the bishops or their commissioners, are after all few and far between; and the extreme punishment with which such irregularities were visited proves that, so far from not being heeded, the moral reputation of the monastic and conventual establishments was considered of the first importance. The faults principally noted are breaches of regular discipline, such as absences from choir or laxity as regards enclosure. Breaches of the vows of poverty or obedience are sternly corrected. Perpetual silence is enforced in the dormitory and elsewhere. Necessary repairs for the conventual buildings are ordered and provision is made for the proper support of the members of the community. Such are the injunctions which are

generally to be found as the result of the episcopal scrutiny, and not uncommonly, when things were more than ordinarily out of order, the visitation, so far as the plenitude of episcopal power went, was continued for six or even twelve months. Then another visit determined whether the faults complained of were sufficiently corrected to warrant the termination of the visitors' supervision.

13. It would be affectation to suggest that the vast regular body in England was altogether free from grosser faults and immoralities. But it is unjust to regard them as existing to any but a very limited extent. Human nature in all ages of the world is the same. The religious habit, though a safeguard, gives no absolute immunity from the taint of fallen nature. The religious of the sixteenth century had passed through many difficulties dangerous to their spiritual no less than to their temporal welfare. Yet, while their moral tone had probably been lowered by the influence of the spirit of the times, the graver faults were certainly confined to individual cases. Anything like general immorality was altogether unknown among the religious of England. This much is clearly proved by the testimony of the acts of episcopal visitations, as well as by the absence of any such sweeping charge till it became necessary for Henry and his agents to blast the fair name of the monastic houses in order the more easily to gain possession of their property.

The reports of Cromwell's visitors no doubt represented the religious houses as being in the worst possible state of moral degradation. Still, subsequent authors have improved upon the picture, and have drawn to a great extent upon their imagination. It is to be hoped that a better knowledge of the methods employed by Henry's agents to blacken the character of those they were about to

despoil may lead to a truer appreciation of the value to be attached to their testimony.[1]

[1] Probably most people are under the impression that in the beginning of the sixteenth century England was overrun by monks. In reality there were fewer monks in proportion to the people than there are ministers in any of the larger Protestant denominations in the United States today. It will be seen from the following citation that there were about eight thousand monks at the time of the suppression of the monasteries. At the same time there were in England about four million people giving on the average only one monk to five hundred of the inhabitants. According to the "World Almanac" (1923) there was one Protestant minister to every one hundred and forty-nine church members and one Catholic priest to every 965 church members. When we recall that the monks were teachers, inn-keepers, and tillers of the soil, and that as social workers they took care of the hospitals and the poor, their number was relatively small.

Benedictine.....	54 houses and.....	1,300	monks
Cluniac.....	8 houses and.....	108	monks
Cistercian.....	40 houses and.....	506	monks
Carthusian.....	9 houses and.....	134	monks
Austin Canons.....	59 houses and.....	773	canons
Premonstratensian..	12 houses and.....	159	canons
Gilbertine.....	20 houses and.....	151	religious
Houses.....202	Monks and canons	3,131	

Friars according to estimate.....	1,800
Monks and canons in lesser monasteries....	1,500
Nuns according to estimate.....	1,560
Total.....	7,991

CHAPTER XVIII

SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION

1. Difficulties of the problem. 2. Correct principles of reform. 3. Introduction of Roman law. 4. General results of the Reformation. 5. Effect of the Reformation on education. 6. Statement of Luther. 7. Ignorance of preachers and teachers. 8. Testimony of contemporary reformers. 9. Loss to the universities. 10. The decline in medical education; all progress at an end. 11. Ignorance and superstition lead to the terrible persecution of witches. 12. Degradation of morals. 13. Luther not a true reformer. 14. Appalling results in England as described by Jessopp. 15. The conclusions of Hibbert. 16. Social picture of the period as given by Lingard. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. We regret that in this chapter we must treat of a subject which brings us into conflict with the opinions of many students of history. We grant that controversy is distasteful, too often barren, and breeds hatred and rancor. If we followed our own inclinations, we would throw a veil of forgetfulness over the religious and social revolts of the sixteenth century and let them be forgotten. We of the twentieth century are unfortunately the heirs of a religious and social animosity which burned deep into the souls of men and women; so deep did it burn that generations were unable to quench the flame. At present we find among us the smoldering embers. How foolish for us again to fan them into a blaze! Yet no student of social history can afford to disregard the period of the sixteenth century and the political, social and religious movement known as the Reformation.

2. That there were abuses at the close of the fifteenth and the dawn of the sixteenth century no one will deny. But the question arises: Was the Reformation of such a character as to tend to correct the evils, and did it in reality bring about such a correction? The veteran social writer and worker Edward T. Devine, after discussing at some length the social problems of our day, cautioned his readers against false principles of reform. He writes: "It will not, I trust, be inferred that I would give aid or countenance to those who with rash or violent hand would destroy the foundations on which mankind has begun to rear the structure of civilization. The institutions which have come into being, not by distinct and deliberate legislative enactments, but by the slow evolutionary processes of natural selection, and by the no less evolutionary and natural processes of the development of law and customs, are of far more significance and value to us all than any artificial, suddenly created mechanism which we are likely to invent. The family, the state, the Church, property, the civil and the criminal law, courts of justice, free exchange of goods and of services, contract, the ballot, public education, public relief, democracy, the rule of the people with standards — these great social institutions I would not overthrow if I could. No revolutionists could overthrow them if they would. When I seek, with absolute frankness, and a very earnest desire to see things as they are, the causes of misery here in the city of New York, I have no more intention of challenging the basis of our society, of our industry, of our civilization, than the physician intends to challenge the laws of anatomy and physiology when he looks upon disease." [1]

3. Luther challenged the very basis of society — religious, social, economic. In social life, as well as in

[1] *Misery and Its Causes*, p. 48.

religious life, he found a fertile field for his seeds of discontent. One of the evils of the Renaissance was the development of false and pagan standards in literature; but its ideals of social life were equally untrue. With pagan literature came Roman law; and Roman law was diametrically opposed to the Christian concept of the nobility of the men who toiled. All labor, as Roman law viewed it, was degrading and the burden of helpless slaves. Under the protection of the false principles of the Roman law kings and princes laid heavy burdens upon their subjects; and had it not been for the strength of the guild members, the great inundation would have swept over Europe in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Owing to this discontent, the minds of the people were in a state of rebellion, and only waited for a leader. Unfortunately the leader was one who could destroy, but not rebuild.

4. In the study of the social effects of the Reformation Janssen will be our principal authority.[1] In the first volume of his classical work the historian pointed out

[1] We cite here a few opinions in regard to Dr. J. Janssen's *History of the German People at the close of the Middle Ages* (1878-1891).

"Janssen's presentation is irrefutable," wrote the French historian Taine. Sorel claimed that "Janssen has by his work won the first rank among German historians." Frederick Paulsen said, "Janssen's history is not the final presentation of the life of this nation, but it is precisely the Protestants who can and *must* learn from him." Ludwig Pastor declared that "more than any of his predecessors Janssen has dissipated the mists that enveloped a decisive epoch in the life of the German nation — he has brought into the domain of history writing a new element, an element full of fruitfulness, the standpoint of the history of culture and the history of social conditions. How insufficient is Ranke's picture of German social and art conditions is clear from the fact that he devoted two pages to the subject, while Janssen gave to Art and Popular Literature one volume of 500 pages."

the position which Germany occupied in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages; her guilds, her commerce, her wealth, her literary inheritance, her folk lore, her songs and sacred drama. When the historian reached the period of the Reformation, he showed that the Reformation was one only in name, and that it fell like a curse upon the land. The German nation, upon which was about to dawn a great literary and social era, was stifled in its inspirations; hatred and war were substituted for love and peace; famine and disease followed upon the religious wars; schools were emptied and learning despised; religious liberty and freedom of thought were denied to all whose beliefs did not tally with the doctrines of these so-called reformers. In every phase of public and private life, in music and song, in lyric poetry and the drama, in sculpture and the plastic arts and architecture, in her guilds and commerce, in her secondary schools and universities, in her hospitals, in the peace and happiness of her people, Germany was wounded almost unto death.

The results of the Reformation as set forth in the above paragraph are verified in *The Cambridge Modern History:* "The vigorous city life of the Middle Ages was a thing of the past; in many a German town the representatives of the territorial sovereign dominated over the elect of the burghers, interfered in their administration, and even controlled their finances. On the shores of the Baltic the destruction of town independence involved the loss of Germany's maritime power, and not until our own day has this eclipse begun to pass. With the decay of civil life went also the ruin of municipal arts and civilization. . . . No age in Germany was more barren of intellectual inspiration than that which succeeded the peace of Augsburg (1555). The internecine struggles of the reign of Charles V had exhausted all classes in the nation, and an

era of universal lassitude followed; intellectually, morally, and politically, Germany was a desert. . . ."[1]

5. Even before the year 1530 numerous schools throughout Germany were closed for lack of means and teachers, while many of those which continued to exist were taught by shoemakers and other untutored workmen, and were a subject of constant criticism and complaint. If this were true of only a few schools, or if it were confined to a single section of the country, the Reformation might still claim to have brought progress in education. The complaint, however, was universal, and came, not from the enemies of the reformers, but from the reformers themselves.

"Inspectors of the Saxon Electorate who visited certain districts in 1526 implored the Elector to restore the town and village schools which had fallen into decay. When two years later an inspectoral visit took place in the electoral circle of Wittenberg, it was found that in 145 towns and rural parishes, with their hundreds of affiliated districts, there were only twenty-one schools; that in Thuringia, in 187 parishes, there were only nine schools; and in Meissen and the Voigtland, in 87 parishes with 238 villages belonging to them, there was only one school. The only bright spot in this dismal picture was the Franconian portion of the electoral lands, where the schools of the Catholic cantons, both in towns and villages, were in full swing and adequate in numbers." [2]

6. Luther could not conceal from himself and others the fact that education was perishing, and complained in 1524: "We are now discovering throughout German lands how everywhere the schools have been allowed to decay. The high schools are losing strength, cloisters are

[1] Vol. 2, p. 279.

[2] Janssen's *History of the German People*, vol. XIII, p. 34.

diminishing; where cloisters and foundations are removed, nobody will any longer allow children to learn and study. . . . Woe, woe to the world, forever and eternally. Every day children are being born and growing up around us, and, alas! there is no one to take care of the poor young things and to train them; so they are left to do what they will. The members of town councils (1529) and nearly all the municipal authorities let the schools go to ruin, as though they had had absolution from all responsibility. Nobody seems to think that God earnestly wills that the children He sends should be brought up to His praise and for His service, which cannot be done without schools. But everybody nowadays is in a hurry and scurry for his children to be earning temporal sustenance." [1]

7. One cause of the general decadence of education arose from the fact that numerous ignorant persons assumed to themselves the office of preachers. From their pulpits they attacked all forms of higher education as useless and urged the parents to teach their children useful trades. A school inspector of the Saxon Electorate in 1538 reported that "preachers devoid of understanding have taught the people that Latin and all languages, together with the fine arts, are of no use for anything." Melanchthon, aroused to indignation against this class of preachers, was in favor of cutting out their tongues. Often these ignorant men were both preachers and teachers; and in the city of Frankfort (1531) we find a shoemaker petitioning the city council for permission to set up a school "to instruct the children properly in the arts of reading and writing, and also to expound the evangelical scriptures." The request was granted on the very day on which it was made — a proof of the low requirements for both teaching and instructing the young.

[1] Quoted in Janssen, vol. XIII, p. 13, etc.

A school teacher in Augsburg (1518) was "a cloth-shearer and a dealer in odd pieces of cloth." [1]

8. It was openly acknowledged by the thoughtful leaders of the time that the people no longer contributed to the support of the teachers or the building or repairing of the schools; and in their distress the ministers and superintendents recalled the generosity with which the faithful had responded to such appeals before the country broke with the Papacy. Christopher Fischer, superintendent at Smalkald, wrote in 1580: "Our dear forefathers, by testaments and other charitable endowments, provided plentifully for the schools; now, however, we are daily finding out that love for the poor, and for poor students, has grown quite cold; people regard as wasted money what they give to churches and schools." John Asseburg, in a school sermon at Tangermunde, in 1609, pointed out "how much people gave under the Papacy for the building of churches and schools; now, however, the most trumpery erections are run up for the purposes, as if they were building sheephouses or barns, and one often sees churches without a tile to cover them or a pane in the windows, and neither masters nor preceptors nor pupils can stay in them on account of the wind and the rain, nor have they enough space, or benches to sit on."

"Who can deny," said a preacher in 1577, "that the Papists speak the truth when they say that under the evangelicals almost all charitable benevolence has ceased, and that preachers, preceptors, and schoolmasters are so meanly paid that they cannot keep their wives and children, and are often obliged to live by begging? I heard a highly renowned preceptor who had long presided over different schools say once that the miserable schools and institutes could not be kept going, but must collapse

[1] *Id.*, vol. XIII, p. 23, etc.

in most places, because the teachers and officials did not receive sufficient pay; and this, he said, was the case even in great principalities and towns, where princes and rulers spent huge sums yearly in pomp and pleasure of all sorts. And yet the teachers of the young ought to have enough to live on; but they had not, let alone that they could not afford to buy books; and the schools themselves often looked like caverns; and where the masters did have dwellings assigned them, these were often dark, bare, tumbledown rooms where wind and rain drove through. And it is the truth and nothing else that he described." [1]

9. If we turn to the universities of Germany we find the same testimony in regard to the evil effects of the Reformation. "When I see," said Melanchthon in a public speech to the university at Wittenberg, in 1537, "how in these days discipline is trodden down and impudence rules, I am filled with profound grief. Never before were the young so rebellious against authority; they follow their own will, and refuse to submit to any other. They are deaf to the Word of God and the laws of man." "It is not the will of God," he said four years later, addressing the students; "that you should all come here like a drunken crowd to the Bacchanalia, or like Centaurs to a feast." Luther also declared it to be: "Unhappily all too true that the young nowadays are wild and demoralized, and will no longer allow themselves to be guided. They go on in their senseless way, are dissolute and uneducated; they grow up in their sensuality and wantonness. Above all, drunkenness has now come in everywhere like a flood and was deluging everything."

In 1562 the general licentiousness and insubordination had reached such a frightful pitch, that the complete

[1] *Id.*, pp. 117-118.

cessation of all study and a reign of cyclopean barbarism was apprehended. "Nothing causes more alarm to virtue-loving men," said Professor Paul Eber, in the same year in a public speech, "than the breakdown of all moral restraints, the contempt of all discipline, the dare-devil blustering, raging, pilfering, which we observe even in those who have scarcely emerged from boyhood." In an academical report of 1564 we read: "We are learning from experience what manner of life is led by numbers at the universities. All complain about it, and respectable people are greatly distressed. We will not, however, make public our disgrace by narrative; the worst evils are drunkenness and insubordination." "It is notorious all over the land," wrote at the same time the Ratisbon preacher Waldner, "how godless are the ways of some among the Wittenberg students, how they indulge in gambling, drinking, immorality, cursing and blaspheming." Two sons of Duke Philip of Pomerania, who were studying at Wittenberg in the years 1563–1565, found such barrenness of intellectual life in the place, and so much coarsness, depravity, vulgarity, debauchery of all sorts, that they went away. They had taken up their abode in the former Augustinian convent, which Luther had received as a present from the Elector of Saxony, and where his son Martin then kept a hotel. They could not stay there, however, for over their apartments were Suabian and Franconian students, whose disorderly conduct by day and night caused great disturbance. Their request to their landlord that he would maintain order and remove these students was all in vain; for the degenerate son of Luther, fallen in fortune, sunk in coarse excesses, was deaf to everything which was likely to diminish the earnings he gained in unrighteous ways. "With drinking and other matters that need not be men-

tioned," wrote one of the dukes, "things are more disorderly at Wittenberg than anywhere else." [1]

A special cause of ruin to the evangelical colleges, and one recognized by Protestants themselves, was the perpetual bickerings and theological dissensions going on between the professors, and taken part in by the students, who insulted and persecuted unpopular teachers; under such circumstances discipline was impossible.

"One has only to look," says a sermon of 1571, "at Wittenberg, at Jena, at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, at Königsberg, and at nearly all the universities which ought to prosper under the light of the dear Gospel, to see how much quarreling and envy, hatred and persecution and expulsion there has been, and still is, among the masters, and that it would be indeed a great wonder of God if all the young pupils and students of these colleges did not fall into all these vices, and become, many of them, out and out corrupted." [2]

8. Another proof of the decline of literature was seen in the drama, which deteriorated into the most disgraceful representations. One remarkable feature of this was the prominence of the evil spirits upon the stage. His satanic majesty and his numerous followers were represented upon the stage, not as mere puppets to please the people, but as living forces which were carrying disease and death and terror into every community. It was an age of superstition, which was so prevalent that it is difficult to explain its sudden growth and widespread influence for evil. A certain terror seized upon the people, and wild religious reformers went here and there among them and aroused them to manifestations of religious superstition and disorder.

[1] *Id.*, p. 286. [2] *Id.*, p. 294.

"The popular drama sank into the deepest mire of degradation, and came to revel in the depiction of the gruesomest objects. Popular writings and romances of the most immoral kind poisoned the imaginations of the people. Narrative literature lent itself wholly to the service of the preposterous and absurd, to nightmares of superstition, witchcraft and demonology, in which the devil was always a favorite figure. Satan, indeed, at that period played a leading part on the stage of the world and humanity. He reigned supreme in life and in fiction."[1]

10. With the decline of education came that of medicine. All the progress that had been made during the thirteeth and fourteenth centuries in surgery and the various methods of healing met with a rude decline with the coming of the teachings of Luther and Melanchthon. Quackery and astrology took the place of the real profession of medicine. Perhaps in the history of few countries did medical superstition gain such a headway as it did in Central Europe during the two centuries which followed the Reformation. All former progress was swept away. So-called physicians spent their time in preparing calendars which also contained weather reports and explanations of the constellation. Even so great an astronomer as Kepler did not escape the evils of the times and, while probably not believing in these follies, he long continued them as a business and drew payment for his work. The science of medicine fell into disrepute, and the country was overrun with quacks, and surgery was left to barbers. Students who wished to receive a course in medicine were forced to leave the country and go to Italy or France. A fear of death, unheard-of in Catholic times, seized upon the people. The plague-stricken were

[1] *Id.*, Vol. XIII, p. 2.

abandoned, not only by the people and their relatives, but by the clergymen.

11. One of the manifestations of superstition was the terrible persecution of witches. A child had only to point its finger at some poor and maimed old woman, and the crowd was ready at once to burn her at the stake. An enemy had only to bring some false charge against a neighbor, and he with difficulty escaped burning. The subtle influence of accusations against witches, even in Colonial times in the New England States, has been well described in Longfellow's *New England Tales;* but neither his generation nor ours has looked for the truth in this matter, and Longfellow's account of witchcraft has found unwilling readers.

"The belief in witches and devils grew to that monstrous phenomenon whose weird horror, towards the end of the sixteenth century, overshadows all other features of German civilization.

"After the outbreak of the schism, belief in the power and the arts of the devil became universally widespread, and the demoralization resulting everywhere from the religious, social and political movements and struggles was especially favorable to the development of the witch superstition, procured for it an extension undreamt of before, and led to the most barbarous procedure, which procedure in turn helped greatly to increase the demoralization of the people. . . .

"On the other hand, at the same date in Switzerland, according to a report of all the places in the district of Baden on March 27, 1531, people were horrified 'because there were so many evil spirits and witches all over the land that it was quite unspeakable.' 'In the Veltlin,' wrote the Protestant Joachim von Watt (Vadian) in 1531, 'there are witches and evil spirits without number,

and three hundred of them have been burnt and the stress of work, which, as he told the council in May, was beyond the strength of one man.' Within three months thirty-four people, amongst them the executioner's own mother, were put to death by sword, fire, gallows and quartering. The actual execution was generally preceded by brutal maltreatment of the body. Calvin, however, was not moved to any sort of pity by these proceedings; with icy coldness, in a businesslike voice, he praised his German friend the preacher Myconius, on account of the wholesale executions. . . .

"Among the Protestants since the last third of the sixteenth century the most frequent and cruel persecutions of witches occurred in north Germany, but in the south also and in Switzerland many thousands of witches perished at the stake.

"Thus, for instance, in the canton of Bern in the years 1591–1600 many more than three hundred persons; in the years 1601–1610 more than 240; in 1613, in one single district, 27 were executed as witches or sorcerers."[1]

12. Finally the reformers themselves were forced to admit and deplore the general degradation of morals. In 1556 the Protestant theologian Andreas Musculus wrote: "If anyone wants to see a great crowd of rascals, insolent folk, cheats, financiers, usurers, etc., let him go into one of the towns where the Evangel is preached, he will find them there in plenty. For it is indeed true that nowhere, not even among pagans, Jews and Turks, are there more good-for-nothing, disreputable people than among the Evangelicals, in the midst of whom the devil has verily been let loose."

"We cannot, alas, deny," says a document (interlarded with Bible texts) of the Constance Council of February

[1] *Id.*, vol. XVI, p. 216–284.

5, 1544, "that Germany is altogether sunk in all manner of terrible sins and vices, that the life of the towns and burghers is greatly polluted, that all civil discipline is at an end. Honor and riches are misused by vainglorious ends, for pomp, pride, superfluity, arrogance, not to speak of worse vices. Those who have embraced the Word of God remain in their old skins. We are keen enough about retaining our traditions, our freedom, our position, and we consult seriously over these matters; but how to establish in our midst Christian morality, godliness, and piety, this is of little moment to us. It is to be feared that God has finally resolved to punish Germany with blood, and since it has drunk itself full with foreign blood and all sorts of iniquity, and still persists in so doing, it must now be drowned in this alien blood and be destroyed in its own wickedness."

"Luther appears to have been very deeply distressed because the new doctrine preached by him did not bring forth the fruits he had promised to the world. Already in 1523 he had compared his own neighborhood with Sodom and Gomorrha. 'All the world,' he said, 'is given up to eating, drinking, profligacy, and all manners of vices.' 'We have become a shame and a laughingstock to all other nations,' he says two years later; 'we behave like scandalous, disgusting brutes, thinking all day and night of nothing else but how we can fill ourselves with drink and get rid of all our reason and wisdom.' 'Germany from beginning to end leads a downright and swinish existence, and if you were to paint her rightly you would paint her like a hog.'"

13. We have dwelt on but a few of the social and economic evils which came to Germany owing to that movement which has falsely been called the Reformation. It reformed nothing and improved nothing. It came as

a curse upon the land. Neither its methods nor its principles can be defended from a religious, social, or economic viewpoint. It is not sufficient to point out that before Luther's time there were evils in religious and social life; evils there were and many of them. In every nation and in every age there are such evils to be corrected. There is a difference, however, between correcting an evil and breaking down a whole social and religious fabric. When the great Charlemagne came to the throne he found social and political evils and set to work to correct them. When Gregory the Great came to the Papacy he found evils in the Church. St. Charles Borromeo in Italy and St. Francis of Sales in France spent their lives in correcting evils; but they were builders and not destroyers, and lived to see their good work succeed. In our time there are economic evils which no one will deny, and yet few of us will admit that socialism can unlock for us the secret of the cure. Socialism is based upon a false foundation and would bring untold harm. So it was with the work of Luther. Omitting for the present any reference to his religious work, we find that economically and socially he brought ruin to central Europe. He was not a builder; he had none of the characteristics of a true reformer. Where he recognized evils he crushed and broke, but he could not build. Historians have had time calmly to sift the evidence and study the social results of the Reformation. There are few of any rank who would give a crown to the so-called reformer.

14. If we turn to England to study the social effects of the Reformation in that country, we shall find the most appalling evil results. The work began with the wholesale robbery of the monasteries and other religious institutions. The matter is no longer controverted; nor do

we have to turn to Catholic historians for a truthful account. Protestant writers have set forth the motives of the plunderers and the methods by which the robbery was executed. We regret that we can give only a short passage from Jessopp. "When I talk about the Great Pillage, I mean that horrible and outrageous looting of our churches other than conventual, and the robbing of the people of this country of property in land and movables, which property had actually been inherited by them as members of those organized religious communities known as parishes. It is necessary to emphasize the fact that in the general scramble of the Terror under Henry the Eighth, and of the anarchy in the days of Edward the Sixth, there was only one class that was permitted to retain any large portion of its endowments. The monasteries were plundered even to their very pots and pans. Almshouses in which old men and women were fed and clothed were robbed to the last pound, the poor almsfolk were being turned out in the cold at an hour's warning to beg their bread. Hospitals for the sick and needy, sometimes magnificently provided with nurses and chaplains, whose very *raison d'être* was that they were to look after and care for those who were past caring for themselves, these were stripped of all their belongings, the inmates sent out to hobble into some convenient dry place to lie down and die in, or to crawl into some barn or hovel, there to be tended not without fear of consequences by some kindly man or woman who could not bear to see a suffering fellow creature drop down and die at their own doorposts." [1]

15. The conclusions of Jessopp are verified by the more recent work of Hibbert, who selects the houses of Staf-

[1] A. Jessopp, *Parish Life in England before the Great Pillage*, p. 37, etc.

fordshire as the field of his study and gives the reader a most detailed record of the destruction and robbery of the religious communities.

" The age was one in which expediency had supplanted principle, and worldly prosperity was the one thing that mattered. The dissolution of the monasteries was to a very large extent prompted by cupidity. Their wealth was an irresistible attraction to the government; to emphasize their shortcomings was a useful afterthought, and the question of justice was hardly raised by anyone. In all the correspondence connected with the fall of the Staffordshire houses there is no hint of immorality or even unworthiness. Indeed the right and wrongs of the business are never alluded to. The one and only topic is the personal gain for which the petitioners hoped, and the pecuniary inducements they tried to hold out to the persons in authority in the hope of gaining their help. But, in the irony of fate, circumstances proved too strong for the government, whose cupidity was largely disappointed. Begun as a source of new supplies for a prodigal king, as the work progressed it developed into a huge scheme for the wholesale bribery of the classes which had political power." [1]

The sale of the least little article of these religious houses disgusts us. A full account of the spoliation is given in the appendix.[2] Here are some of the articles taken from the Brewood Nunnery:

(1) Chapel: carved-wood porticoes, paving of chapels, glass settees. (2) Parlors: folding table, chairs, cupboard, hangings of cloth. (3) Buttery: ale tubs, old chest, table cloth, candlestick and lantern. (4) Kitchen:

[1] *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, by F. A. Hibbert. Pitman & Sons, pp. 212-213.

[2] *Id.*, pp. 225-275.

porringers, saucers, brass pots, ladder, dressing boards. (5) Larder: one great chest, trough, little barrels. (6) Brewhouse: five tubs, one keler, one old tub, one old wheel, one cheese press.

Then follows a description of the vestments, copes, etc., all of which were taken away to be made into finery for lords and ladies. Lead and brass were very valuable; wonderful bells were melted down, and the churches and convents were in many instances converted into stables.

16. The two Protestant historians quoted above have but verified the conclusions reached by Lingard:

"The mendicants, who had formerly obtained relief at the gates of the monasteries and convents, now wandered in crowds through the country, and by their numbers and importunities often extorted alms from the intimidated passenger. To abate this nuisance a statute was enacted, which will call to the recollection of the reader the barbarous manners of our pagan forefathers. Whosoever 'lived idly and loiteringly for the space of three days,' came under the description of a vagabond, and was liable to the following punishment. Two justices of the peace might order the letter 'V' to be burnt on his breast, and adjudge him to serve the informer two years as his slave. His master was bound to provide him with bread, water, and refuse meat; might fix an iron ring around his neck, arm, or leg, and was authorized to compel him to 'labor at any work however vile it might be, by beating, chaining or otherwise.' If the slave absented himself a fortnight the letter 'S' was burnt on his cheek or forehead, and he became a slave for life; and if he offended a second time in like manner, his flight subjected him to the penalties of felony. . . . During the reign of Edward VI social conditions reached a still lower level. Within the realm, poverty and discontent gen-

erally prevailed. The extension of enclosures, and the new practice of letting lands at rack rents, had driven from their homes numerous families, whose fathers had occupied the same farms for several generations; and the increasing multitudes of the poor began to resort to the more populous towns in search of that relief which had been formerly distributed at the gates of the monasteries. Nor were the national morals improved, if we may judge from the portraits drawn by the most eminent of the reformed preachers. They assert that the sufferings of the indigent were viewed with indifference by the hardheartedness of the rich; that in pursuit of gain the most barefaced frauds were avowed and justified; that robbers and murderers escaped punishment by the partiality of juries and the corruption of judges; that church livings were given to laymen or converted to the use of the patrons; that marriages were repeatedly dissolved by private authority; and that the haunts of prostitution were multiplied beyond measure.

"Thus Lever exclaims: 'O merciful Lord! what a number of poor, feeble, halt, blind, lame, sickly, yea, with idle vagabonds and dissembling caitiffs mixed among them, lie and creep, begging in the miry streets of London and Westminster.' " [1]

So important is this subject that we shall give two supplementary chapters to the social effects of the Reformation. The authors whom we shall cite have given their lives to the study of the period; they are acknowledged specialists; and few will doubt their authority or question their conclusions.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

Note. — In the following numbers reference will be given to Janssen's *History of the German People.* His treatment is exhaustive

[1] Lingard's *A History of England,* Vol. VII, p. 91.

and gives a mass of information which throws a new light upon the much debated question of the social and economic effects of the Reformation. We would not wish, however, to restrict the students to this one source. The class should plan papers on kindred topics and search elsewhere for information.

1. Decline of the sacred drama — Vol. xii, pp. 1-36.
2. Decline of the drama — Satan on the stage — Vol. xii, pp. 36-142.
3. Decline of the drama — Murder and immorality — Vol. xii, pp. 142-185.
4. Decline of literature — Wonders and horrors — Vol. xii, pp. 228-278.
5. Decline oflit erature — Occult arts and magic — Vol. xii, pp. 278-310.
6. Decline of literature — Devil-literature —Vol. xii, pp. 310-389.
7. Decay of schools after the Reformation — Vol. xiii, pp. 1-58.
8. Condition of Protestant schools — Vol. xiii, pp. 59-129.
9. Schools in Catholic territories — Vol. xiii, pp. 129-166.
10. School drama among Protestants and Catholics — Vol. xiii, pp. 166-209.
11. Universities under Catholic authorities — Vol. xiii, pp. 209-259.
12. Universities under Protestant authorities — Vol. xiii, pp. 260-324.
13. Medical Education in the Middle Ages — Vol. xiv, pp. 1-42.
14. Plagues and other calamities — Vol. xiv, pp. 63-115.
15. Book Censorship — Decline of Printing — Vol. xiv, pp. 498-553.
16. Revival of usury — Vol. xv, pp. 1-69.
17. Defects in mining and minting — Vol. xv, pp. 70-107.
18. Decay of industrial trades — Vol. xv, pp. 107-137.
19. Decline of agriculture — Vol. xv, pp. 137-222.
20. Corruption of court life — Vol. xv, pp. 223-270.
21. Luxury in clothes and jewelry — Vol. xv, pp. 270-330.
22. Extravagance among lower classes — Vol. xv, pp. 354-386.
23. Increase of drunkenness — Vol. xv, pp. 387-424.
24. Growing pauperism — Vol. xv, pp. 425-493.
25. Increase of beggars and vagabonds — Vol. xv, pp. 493-526.
26. Moral and religious chaos after the Reformation — Vol. xvi, pp. 1-51.

27. Pernicious effects in Catholic territories — Vol. xvi, pp. 51-85.
28. Growth of moral and religious anarchy (1520-1550) — Vol. xvi, pp. 85-135.
29. Increase of crime — Vol. xvi, pp. 136-174.
30. Abuses and tortures in criminal law — Vol. xvi, pp. 174-215.
31. Persecution of witches in the Middle Ages — Vol. xvi, pp. 216-268.
32. Spread of the persecution of witches after the Reformation — Vol. xvi, pp. 269-310.
33. Opposition to persecution of witches — Vol. xvi, pp. 311-409.
34. Persecution of witches in Catholic lands — Vol. xvi, pp. 410-477.

References for Further Study

Acton, Lord, *The Cambridge Modern History.* Vol. xi, p. 275.
Belloc, Hilaire, *Europe and the Faith; The Servile State.*
Gasquet, Cardinal, *The Eve of the Reformation; Monastic Life in the Middle Ages; The Old English Bible, and Other Essays; Henry VIII and the English Monasteries; Henry III and the Church; Parish Life in Medieval England.*
Hibbert, F. A., *The Dissolution of Monasteries.*
Janssen, Johannes, *History of the German People at the close of the Middle Ages.*
Jessopp, A., *Parish Life in England Before the Great Pillage.*
Lingard, John, *History of England.* Vol. vii.
MacCaffrey, James, *History of the Catholic Church from the Renaissance to the French Revolution.* Vol. i, Chap. I; *Causes of the Reformation.*
O'Brien, Geo., *An Essay on the Economic Effect of the Reformation.*
O'Connor, J. B., *Monasticism and Civilization.*
Parsons, Reuben, *Studies in Church History.* Vol. iii, p. 328, etc.
Taunton, E. L., *The English Black Monks of St. Benedict.*
Smyth, H. P., *The Reformation.*
Walsh, J. J., *Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries.*

CHAPTER XIX

SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION[1]

Continued

1. Luther on the decline of benevolence. 2. Robbing the poor. 3. Generosity in pre-Reformation times. Squandering institutional funds. 4. Neglect of hospitals. 5. Failure in methods of relief. 6. Seizure of church goods. 7. Treatment of preachers. 8. Prevailing idleness among the people. 9. Useless legislation. 10. System of mendicancy. 11. Classification of vagrants. 12. Appalling increase of beggars. 13. Contemporary reports on beggars and gipsies. 14. Larceny. Criminal riffraff. 15. Insecurity owing to robbers, murderers, and incendiaries.

1. The decrease of benevolence to the poor and of contributions in general to all good objects, and the increase of an insatiable greed of gain were matters of standing complaint among the Protestants. Nobody spoke more strongly and more frequently on the subject than Luther. "Under the Papacy," he said, "it snowed alms, foundations, legacies. Under the Evangel, on the contrary, no one will give a farthing." "Under the Papacy people were charitable and gave gladly, but now under the Evangel nobody any longer gives anything, but they all fleece each other, and each one wants to grab all for himself alone. And the longer the Evangel is preached, the deeper do people become sunk in avarice, pride and vainglory, just as if the poor beggar was always to remain here." "All the world fleeces and flays, and yet nobody must be called avaricious, but everybody is a good evangelical and a good Christian. And this

[1] *History of the German People*, by Janssen, Vol. xv, pp. 464, etc. Reprinted with permission of the publishers.

fleecing and flaying is done to nobody so much as to poor Brother Study, and to the poor pastors in towns and villages." "These must stand still and let themselves be skinned and strangled, and what the peasants, burghers and nobles scrape off them they drink and gorge away, or spend on all too extravagant, luxurious food and clothing; they either drive it down their throats, or hang it around their necks. Therefore I have often said that such a state of things cannot last much longer; it must collapse; either the Turks or Brother Veit will come and at one stroke carry off all the people have so long been amassing by flaying, fleecing, robbing, and thieving; or the Day of Judgment will rush in and put an end to the game."

In other parts of his writings Luther says: "Under the Papacy everybody was kind and merciful; they gave joyfully with both hands and with great reverence. Nowadays, although they ought to show themselves grateful for the holy Evangel, no one will give anything but only 'take.' Formerly every large town could richly support a few cloisters, not to speak of mass-priests and wealthy foundations; now they even grudge to maintain two or three preachers, spiritual ministers and instructors of youths in one town, even when they have not got to do it out of their own but out of alien goods which are still left over from the Papacy." And again: "Those who ought to be good Christians because they have heard the Gospel, are harder and more merciless than before, as is too plainly patent to all beholders. Of old, when under the guidance of the Papacy and of a false worship, people were obliged to do good works, everybody was ready and willing. Now, on the contrary, the world has learnt nothing else than to flay, fleece, and openly rob and plunder by lying and cheating, by usury,

forestalling and overcharging. And everyone acts against his neighbor, as though he did not regard him as a friend, still less as a brother in Christ, but as a murderous enemy, and only wanted to get everything for himself alone. This goes on daily and gains head without intermission, and is the most common practice and custom in all classes, among princes, nobles, burghers, peasants, in all courts, towns and villages; yea, verily in all houses. Tell me, where is there a town however large that is pious enough to collect together as much as would maintain one schoolmaster or pastor? Yes, indeed, if it had not been for the charitable alms and endowments of our forefathers, the burghers in our cities, the nobles and peasants in the country, would long ago have been deprived of the Evangel, and not a single poor preacher would have been fed and clothed. For we will not do it ourselves, but we take and seize by force what others have given and founded. Thanks also to the dear Evangel, the people have become so abominably wicked, so inhuman, so diabolically cruel and merciless, that they are not content with profiting by the Evangel themselves, growing fat thereon through plunder and robbery of church goods, but as far as others are concerned they starve the Gospel completely out. You may count upon your fingers, here and elsewhere, all that they give and do for it, they who profit by it themselves; for ourselves, who are living now, there has long been no preacher, no scholar able to teach our children and descendants what we have taught or believed." "Ought we not to be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves when we think of our parents and forefathers, kings and nobles, princes and others, who gave so liberally and so benevolently even to superfluity, to churches, parsonages, schools, foundations, hospitals, etc., and by all which they and their descendants were not impoverished?"

2. "I fear me," said he, preaching on the robbery of widows and orphans, "that we are in such wise trifling with the Evangel, that we are a greater offence to God than the Papists. For if there is to be stealing it is better to steal from a rich man than from a poor beggar, or an orphan who has nothing but a morsel of bread. Sirach said: 'Do not the widow's tears run down her cheek, and her cry against him that causeth them to fall? For from the cheek they go up even to heaven, and the Lord that heareth will not be delighted with them.' God is not called in vain the Father of widows and orphans; for if they are forsaken by every man, God still looks after them!" He pronounced a woe: "Woe unto you peasants, burghers, nobles, who grab and scrape up everything for yourselves and pretend all the time to be good evangelicals."

Because people were so charitable under the Papacy, God, in reward, gave them good times then. "Christ says: 'Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom.' And this also is shown by the experience of numbers of pious people of all times, who before our day gave alms liberally for the office of preaching, for schools, for the maintenance of the poor, and so forth, and to whom God in return gave good times, peace and rest; hence the proverb which has gone abroad among the people and which confirms what I have said: 'Churchgiving does not hurt any one, almsgiving does not impoverish, ill-gotten goods do not profit.' Hence we now see in the world the opposite of what was seen formerly; because such avarice and greed prevail, and nobody gives anything to God or man, but, on the contrary, they take for themselves what others have given, thus sucking the blood and the sweat of the poor. God

gives us in reward scarcity, discontent and all sorts of misfortune, until at last we shall be reduced to eating one another up, rich and poor, great and small, all alike will be devoured by each other."

Similar complaints of the decrease of the olden-time charity towards the poor, which helped them by benevolent foundations of all sorts and by alms, occur in the sermons of other preachers of the new Evangel. "Cruel mercilessness," wrote the preacher Thomas Rorarius in 1572, "has gained ground everywhere; almsgiving is considered a thing of the past, and yet every one who wished to give proof of his faith ought to abound in good works towards his neighbors; as in former days the poor had been abundantly helped, so it ought to be nowadays; only the merciful would find mercy with God."

3. "Our Catholic ancestors," said Andrew Musculus, superintendent general of the Altmark, "had thought diligently about future things, and in order to ward off future punishment had done all they could, in the way of mortification, fasting, praying, almsgiving, foundations and so forth; now, on the contrary, people have thought neither of heaven nor of hell, neither of God nor of the devil. Churches, schools, hospitals are plundered, robbed, destroyed; the young are grievously neglected, the children of the poor are shut out from study, God's poor are forsaken." "Pilfering, stealing, taking," preached Musculus at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, "goes on without ceasing, nothing is spared, albeit it is the blood and sweat of the poor; the devil is especially at home in the council house." "The old women are obliged to freeze and starve in tumbledown hospitals; their rooms are very dog kennels; rats and mice swarm in their beds of straw and nobody cares. All the years I have lived I have never seen the poor so badly looked after as now" (in the year

1576.) "The cashkeepers deserve hell for their treatment of the poor; they will not allow them to stand in front of the church doors, and yet they will give them nothing."

4. Johann Winistede, preacher at Quedlinburg, implored the town councillors there that "They would give all possible diligence to seeing that the poor people in the hospitals of the Holy Ghost, of St. John, and of our Blessed Lady, were well-cared for, and that the funds intended for them were not kept from them or diminished." In the Mansfield district, according to the report of Erasmus Sarcerius in 1555, "the care of the poor was quite neglected; the hospitals were wretchedly managed; the funds intended for poor relief were fraudulently spent."

The town of Parchim in Mecklenburg had, in 1563, ten hospitals and poorhouses dating from Catholic times, but in that very year, owing to many foundations having been dissipated, the number had to be reduced to four.

As regards the hospitals founded in olden times, Ambrosius Pape, Lutheran pastor at Klein-Ammensleben, said in 1586: "It is a great and punishable evil that they no longer admit poor people, but only rich ones. Whoever cannot give twenty talers or fifty to a hundred, need not seek admission to these hospitals." "The excuse that they 'cannot get on with this meager income' will not hold water, for people may be admonished from the pulpits that every Christian ought to contribute something according to his means, and open a benevolent hand towards the poor, for which God would richly reward him." "Further, several people might be sent out from such poorhouses, to make house-to-house collections for them; God helping, this would be approved of by many people, not only because other beggars would

not be allowed to go round and be a nuisance to them, but also because these organized beggars would pray for their donors and benefactors and wish and procure them all sorts of blessedness." "To give to the poor according to one's means was earnestly commanded by God and met with God's unfailing reward. . . ."

5. In a German pamphlet on the first organized system of poor relief in the Duchy of Zweibrucken, published at Zweibrucken in 1557 by the General Superintendent Cunemann Flinsbach, it says: "It has come to pass in these last times even according to the prophecy of Christ, Matthew xxiv, where he says that in the latter days the love of many will wax cold. For in the days of the Apostles and in the primitive Church, godly zeal drove Christians to give gladly for the love of God. This too was the case with some of the Christian emperors who were very kind to the poor and helped them in a very Christian manner in their distress. And under the papacy people gave abundantly for the maintenance of divine worship and for the relief of the poor. But, alas, in these our days, although the Evangel and God's Word are being preached in truth and purity, not only has this zeal to help the poor ceased, but when the poor are deprived of the funds and endowments which were intended for them, the world does not protest. And this is certainly not the least among the causes of the present day scarcity, bad crops and other evils."

The writer then proposes schemes for poor relief modeled partly on the Catholic practice, partly on "Christian, well-ruled churches, such as were to be found in Saxony, Wurtemberg, Strasburg and elsewhere."

The preachers themselves could not be blind to the fact that the new doctrine of justification through faith alone, everywhere cut the nerve of voluntary sacrifice.

"However much," wrote the renowned theologian, Andrew Hyperius, professor since 1542 at the University of Marburg, "people are exhorted to benevolence towards the needy and distressed, nobody will take any interest in them; it is, alas! evident that all feeling of love is extinguished in the hearts of men. Preachers must therefore be more sparing in the pulpit with the doctrine of salvation by faith alone; they must incite their congregations to good works and, as far as this is possible, bring them back to a fruit-producing faith."

In like manner spoke the Superintendent General, Christopher Fischer: "Works of mercy are all frozen up, while those of mercilessness have mightily increased. Our dear forefathers by bequests and in other ways made benevolent provisions for the maintenance of churches and schools, but now, alas! we see every day that charity towards the poor, towards hospitals, towards poor students and others has grown quite cold; the poor are fleeced and flayed, and ground down to the uttermost farthing."

"With our forefathers," wrote Sixt Vischer, pastor of Lutzelburg in 1608, "works of charity were constantly practised towards the poor people in hospitals, infirmaries, and lazarettos; and food, drink, cordials, money, sheets, shirts and other necessary articles were given to them in abundance. Where now are there any works of mercy? Where any trust and faith? Where discipline and respectability? What has become of the conscience of the nation?"

6. The whole system of poor relief was grievously affected by the seizure and the dissipation of Church goods and of innumerable charitable bequests intended not only for parochial and church use but also for hospitals, schools and poorhouses.

Luther had already in 1523 expressed the fear that "the church goods would come to be scrambled for, and that each one would grab what he liked, as had happened in Bohemia." The year before Thomas Murner had predicted concerning the plunder of Church goods:

> For when the goods they all have taken,
> And a mighty heap have maken,
> The poor will get as fair a lot
> As poor men in Bohemia got.
> There too the people thought to reap
> An equal portion of the heap;
> But lo! the rich man took the whole
> And left the poor man making dole.

Later on Luther said that everybody "wanted to grow fat on the plunder and robbery of Church goods." "The devil," he wrote, "is trying his hand with all classes, to make them deal dishonestly with the Church goods and the common funds. Great lords keep house with the Church goods clearly intended for better purposes. What the ancestors gave and bequeathed abundantly for the poor, they want to keep for themselves and spend as they like." "The same with burghers and peasants and that which they ought to give to their pastors; one sees how unfaithfully they act. Hence it follows, as the prophet Malachi threatened, that God's wrath is so manifest, that everybody, the great lords as well as the burghers and peasants, is reduced to beggary through these said goods. This could well be borne, were it not for the concomitant evil that schools and church fall away and the poor people are sadly neglected. This is the work of the devil incarnate, who sees how it will all end." In every principality, every town, every village, Luther said, "there was need for people who would deal honestly with the church goods, who would have regard not to their

own wants and avarice, but to the necessities of those to whom the goods by right belonged," namely, the ministers of the Church, the poor, and indigent boys with capacity for study. "The great misfortune is that we have no people of this sort, honest, Godfearing, and capable, to entrust with this management."

7. The treatment of the church ministers, the pastors and preachers grieved Luther most deeply. "No one gives anything to these men," he said, "and what's more, the little they have is taken out of their mouths by the scandalous, ungrateful world, the princes, nobles, burghers and peasants, so that they and their poor wives and children are obliged to suffer want and misery, and they leave destitute widows and orphans behind them." "We see everywhere how the official people, the tax-gatherers, the judges, the burghers, the peasants, and their work people treat these servants of God; they hold them cheaper and lower than cowherds and swineherds." "So too do the nobles proceed and appropriate for themselves the church benefices. We handed over to them the great abbey and Church goods only in order that they might provide for the pastorates, but they do not do this." "The nobles exact the most menial secular services from their pastors, they turn them into calefactors and stove-heaters, messengers and letter-carriers, they rob them of the tithes and incomes to which they look for sustenance of their families, and all the time these nobles are good evangelicals!" "It is a matter of daily experience," he said in another place, "that nobody, neither burghers, peasants or nobles, gives gladly nowadays a farthing to the Evangel and the preachers, yea verily, they all of them much prefer to rob the poor churches of all that was given them of old." In the villages the pastors were actually obliged to tend the cows and pigs like the

peasants. "The pastors and preachers are not only despised, they are also badly treated."

Luther stands by no means alone with his complaints. "Never before," wrote Melanchthon in 1528, "has the attitude of the world been so unfriendly and odious as today. Some folk, who pretend to be strongly evangelical, take possession of the goods which were given for parsonages, pulpits, schools and churches, without which we should at last become pagans. The common people refuse their pastors their dues, and those indeed chiefly who boast most of being evangelical."

"The ungrateful world," wrote John Winistede, "behaves as a rule in such a way to the pious, faithful preachers, that while they are serving and working, they have scarcely anything to eat. But when they become infirm and ill, and die, their poor wives and children must go about asking for bread, and are in fact reduced to beggary. . . ."

"It is a dire extremity," said the preacher, Hartmann Braun, "When preachers are fed with dogs' crusts, and their children have only a scrap of bread to break, so long as the fathers are alive."

Even if some of the preachers were liberally remunerated their number was small in the extreme. Even in Nuremberg the incumbent and the chaplain of St. Sebald and St. Laurence complained to the council that they had suffered, and still were suffering, great scarcity in their daily food, so that at times they had to endure bodily weakness and sickness, and could not get necessary help. The theologian John Knipstro said that as a preacher at Straslund he would have been obliged to beg from door to door if his wife had not earned something by embroidery. The Superintendent, John Federus, in 1547, presented to the Straslund Council a pamphlet, in

which he begged urgently "that at least necessary provision should be made for preachers starving with their wives and children"; the Church and the poor were being robbed.

It was indeed "a great and atrocious sin," said several professors of the Rostock University in a petition to the Dukes of Mecklenburg, "that numbers of lords, in former times, had taken possession of the charitable foundations, whereby the church all over the country, and especially in the villages, had been reduced to a lamentable condition." In order simply to keep alive, the preacher at Gnoien in Mecklenburg, for instance, was obliged in addition to his spiritual office to fill the post of *chef de cuisine* and tax collector to a prince. A Wesenberg church inspectoral protocol of 1568 complained that the church revenues which the squires had not taken possession of were drunk away in beer by the peasants. . . .

8. The generally prevailing idleness of the people was designated as one of the most cancerous evils of the day. In 1542 the committee of the Provincial Estates in the Duchy of Saxony said there was a dearth of servants everywhere, because everybody preferred begging to working.

"Numbers of idle men and women," says a police ordinance of 1550, "live upon alms and will not work; although they are quite able to earn their living, they prefer idleness and begging, and this makes it difficult to get day laborers and servants." An electoral decree against beggars (1588) said: "Young, healthy, strong men and women give themselves up to begging and teach their children the same trade, so that in all towns and villages the inhabitants are pestered and annoyed by these vagrants in all the streets, lanes and roads. . . .

Fatherless and motherless children roam about in the towns and in the country begging like the adults."

"There is a dearth of working people," said the Landgrave Louis of Hesse, in 1571, "because most of the people, as experience shows, are given up to idleness; many who are quite able to earn their bread, instead of working, go about begging with their children." The Landgrave Maurice of Hesse complained even more strongly, in 1601, of the "idleness and begging that was gaining ground everywhere, in consequence of which workmen were difficult to get."

9. "The whole world," said Luther in the gospel sermons of the church postilles, "is full of useless, cheating, wicked scoundrels, day laborers, lazy artisans, farm servants, maid servants, and the idle, vagabond beggar folk who prowl about everywhere unpunished with their tricks and their impudence, cheating, humbugging, and stealing and defrauding the genuine poor of their rightful dues." As a warning against all this sort of riffraff, by whom "he himself had been humbugged this very year more than he liked to say," Luther prepared and prefaced, in the years 1528 and 1529, new editions of the *Liber Vagatorum*. He insisted emphatically that, "Every town and village ought to be acquainted with its own poor, as put down in the register, so that they might know how to help them, but that alien and foreign beggars were not to be tolerated unless they could produce credentials. For there is far too much villainy carried on amongst them, as this little book will show. And if every town were to take cognizance of its own poor, such villainy would soon be put a stop to." Nevertheless so little was this villainy stopped that in 1560 Cyriacus Spangenberg published a fresh edition of the "Booklet" because, said he, "share begging and trickery has so gained

the upper hand that scarcely anybody is safe from imposture. Those therefore who wished to be forewarned should read this book carefully; those who will not be advised cannot be helped." Twenty years later the superintendent Nicholas Selnekker complained that the land was full of beggars "who practiced all sorts of evil and rascality, thieving, murder, magic and so forth." "There were plenty of funds for churches, schools, hospitals and the maintenance of the poor, if only the devil incarnate did not blind our eyes and take such strong possession of our avaricious hearts, that we sought to make our own profit and riches out of the alms boxes. There are too many land loafers and itinerant scholars going about with rank imposture and trickery, people who ought not to be tolerated in a well-regulated community. They like to live and enjoy themselves on other people's toil, to beg and idle about; they work at nothing regularly and only annoy and injure other people."

10. A full description of the entire system of mendicancy was given by Ambrosius Pape, in 1586. "This nuisance," he wrote, "became more and more terrible and unbearable because no one had the courage to oppose it resolutely, and because the magistrates were negligent in inflicting punishment and took no pains to put down the offenders. Where any and every scoundrel is free to carry on his iniquity, things get worse and worse and the godless riffraff increases from day to day, as has happened here and always does happen. Whereas no steps were taken to check this evil at its beginning, and it has spread like a cancer and almost covered the whole land and choked all the good seed, the matter must now be taken up in good earnest and no trouble spared to help in its suppression." It was for this reason that he had written his book as a "faithful and bold attempt" by which

he might perhaps succeed in raising up a deliverer for the nation oppressed by this countless horde of beggars.

Like all his contemporaries Pape too gave as reasons for the ever-increasing plague of beggars: the general distaste for work, nobody any longer caring to live by toil, but all wishing to have good times, and further the prevalence of drunkenness; the way in which fathers of households neglected their homes; and the depravity of the populace, whose lewdness, insolence, dishonesty and rascality were so great in towns and villages that it was impossible to write enough about it all. Many kingdoms had been impoverished and reduced to beggary through the special visitation of God on account of their oppression of the poor and the robbery of ecclesiastical goods — churches, schools, hospitals and poorhouses — which was carried on by high and low.

11. First among the beggars who infest the country Pape puts the able-bodied tramps and odd-jobbers, "the terror and torture of the whole land." Next come the idle young fellows who loathe work, and in company of lewd women and rogues, rob, steal, and murder wherever there is a chance. Akin to these are the wandering musicians who ask for no alms, but sell their songs and tunes and waste the proceeds in rioting; they are mixed with every mischief going on. Then we have ditchers and such who can find no work to do, no masters to serve. Also clerks and all sorts of artisans who tell you how they have traveled through many lands, and lost all they possessed through sickness, or robbers. Further, vagrant scholars, by word or writing, apply for a trifle to help them on the road; preachers "and other common folk" pretend to have suffered persecution and exile for the true religion whereas in truth they have been removed for their evil deeds; numerous old and worn-out people, past

work, drag their wretchedness from village to village and are present at every feast. Among these beggars there are many downright scoundrels ever up to mischief. Young women are often in their company. They like to travel together, but when they approach a township they separate in order to multiply their begging power. All these are "the honest poor."

Besides them there are the imposters who "have a house of children with nothing to eat"; pretended orphans "with no home and no one to look after them"; the maimed, the lame, the blind and sufferers from the most loathesome and most painful diseases, who encumber churches, squares and roads, preying alike on public and private charity. Many have learned some dodge to simulate illness; that dodge is to them more familiar than the Pater noster and more pleasing than a new coat. Pape then recounts all the unfortunate experiences he himself had had with beggars, especially in the open country, where he scarcely felt sure of life and property owing to the swarms of strong-bodied mendicants. In short, "the villiany of all the many different kinds of beggars was greater than anything ever known on earth before."

12. In the large towns also, where most energetic efforts had been made to do away with the nuisance, mendicancy had increased in an appalling manner. In Lubeck, for instance, in 1531, the council had prohibited begging of every description, but already in 1553 it was necessary to issue a decree to the effect that the mendicancy officers were to go on Sunday morning with bailiffs to all the churches and drive the beggars into the service, and also forbid them to expose their wounds shamelessly to view. In Hamburg the council complained in 1604 that begging had so gained the upper hand in the town

that the burghers and other inhabitants were not only pestered and annoyed by it from morning to night, but that no respectable man who had anything to say to some one else in the house or out of it, could get through his talk without being interrupted by a beggar.

What an amount of poverty there was and what enormous crowds of wandering beggars is shown by quantities of reports of undoubted veracity. In 1529, for instance, at the time of the great famine, there appeared in Strasburg 1600 alien poor who were lodged and fed in one of the suppressed convents until the following spring; in 1530, 23,545 aliens passing through the town were received into the refuge for the destitute. In 1566, on a certain day about midsummer, 900 strangers, driven there by hunger, were counted. The council let them stay one night in the refuge for the destitute, gave them food and drink, and the next day they were marshaled out of the city gate, and the whole enormous gang trudged off to go and beg elsewhere. From St. John's day, 1585–1586, the number of vagrants received into the said refuge was 41,058; in the following year there were actually 58,561; as to indigenous paupers, the council during these last two years, out of a population of 30,000, reported no less than 142,203 cases of recipients of charity. At Basle there were sometimes in one year 40,000 aliens to be dealt with. Similarly in Wurtemberg, "there was an overwhelming concourse not only of poor women and children from neighboring towns and hamlets, but also of indigenous and alien disbanded soldiers, land loafers, students, musicians, writers, schoolmasters, lackeys and so forth."

13. Contemporary reports on the proceedings of these beggars border on the incredible. "The lying and cheating of which all these many kinds of beggars are guilty

might be bearable if it stopped there," said Ambrosius Pape, "but it does not stop there. They rob and strangle people and beat them in such an abominable way, that one scarcely can go out of one's house in safety, or sleep therein in quiet ease. If a wedding takes place in any village they come in swarms, so that there are often more of them than of invited guests, and one wonders whence all this rabble has sprung, who brought them the news that here or there something was going on. Young and old, women and children, they fill nearly the whole courtyard, and seating themselves in row after row take possession of four or five tables, and almost as much food is carried to them as to the guests who were bidden. Hence the prospect of a wedding in a village is enough to give one 'the blues.' I have often said that if I were to court ten times, even the very richest of brides, and to have wedding festivities in a village, I should verily hesitate, for the villainy that goes on is too atrocious and there is no fear whatever among these scoundrels. In winter time, they force their way into private rooms, and sit down at the table or round the stove, so that one can neither go in nor out. After cunningly watching their opportunities in houses they come at night, break in, steal and carry off what they like, and if they have a grudge against the householder, and are bloodthirstily inclined, or perhaps afraid they will not be able to complete their robbery should the household awaken, they will murder all whom they come across, as is known from experience. Witness the case of the pastor at Ebendorf." Pape describes many frightful murders which took place in his immediate neighborhood, all within fourteen days: "so horrible that to hear about them might well make one's hair stand on end and one's skin creep."

14. Corresponding descriptions from all parts of Germany show that the whole country was a prey to the scourge of swindling beggars, with their brutal, inhuman robberies, murders, incendiarism and so forth. "Would that God," wrote Hans Sachs in 1559, "might send us a German Hercules to rid our land of robbery, murder and torments; for nobody is safe any longer."

In the same year the Franconian Imperial Estates joined together in a league simply and solely "on account of the injurious and dangerous plunderings, swindlings, robberies, murders, etc., which were of such frequent occurrence in the Holy Empire. They had, however, as little success with their league as the separate Estates had with numerous ordinances against all the mendicant crew. Nor could there by any result, since almost the only means resorted to was banishment, and so one magistrate drove the riffraff to another magistrate, and it was kept in a continued state of circulation and driven to the perpetration of the most manifold crimes and iniquities."

"The worst of all these depredators were the discharged roving soldiers, who went about in large gangs, quartered themselves on the peasants and even in the markets and small open towns, and committed the foulest excesses. In their train followed often all sorts of vagrant riffraff, beggars, male and female, gipsies, jugglers and the like." They were not satisfied with plunder, robbery and murder, but they also set fire to the ripe cornfields. In Bavaria, for instance, these disbanded soldiers formed raiding bands, against whom the communities and the provincial tribunals were in a state of perpetual warfare. In 1565 they burned down four large villages in one district.

15. In Hesse in 1590 it was complained that "all sorts of alien beggars, foreign and other unemployed

riffraff pour into the town, amongst them also freebooters from the Netherlands. These people commit arson, lie in wait for travelers, assault and rob pedestrians in the roads, often even in the neighborhood of populous towns." In 1600 an edict was issued by the Count of Schaumburg against roving soldiers, land loafers, foreign beggars, planet readers and other imposters, who greatly oppressed the people in many ways, but especially at weddings and christenings, where they frequently gathered and compelled people to give them charity. Even at funerals the vagabonds actually clamored for alms. The house of mourning would be beset by a crowd of beggars and children, all asking alms of the mourners, and if their requests were not favorably received, they would proceed to threats and defiance. They came in shoals into towns and villages, forced themselves into houses under the semblance of beggars, made the streets unsafe, practiced robbery, murder and incendiarism.

"Burning, begging and brigandage are gaining head more and more; the miscreants become more and more irrepressible," said an edict of 1596; and three years later "We hear daily complaints of the increasing iniquities of the vagabond class." "The system of private warfare," said the Elector Joachim Frederick in 1603, "despite all the corporal and capital punishment that has been enforced, is becoming so common in almost all parts of our principality, that even unknown foreigners, without any given or known reason, scapegrace godless villains belonging to the land, who have not been allowed to carry out to the full their iniquitous wills and dealings, have the audacity to send letters of challenge and other tokens of hostility to whole towns, hamlets, communities, villages, thereby bringing the utmost misery and ruin on scores of innocent people. These people must be proceeded

against with fire and sword." Nevertheless after the lapse of three years came the statement: "In spite of all earlier enactments, private warfare, incendiarism, robbing and plundering by soldiers and beggars is going on unchecked all over the land; for this reason every individual who aids and abets the criminals, or who does not, when he can, give information concerning them to the magistrates, must be punished like them with fire and sword." What was the result of this decision is seen from a decree of the Elector John Sigismund in 1615: "Never before have the numbers of the criminal class been so great as now; there are as many as sixty of them to one gang, and they join together in quantities and have never perpetrated more crime than nowadays. They blackmail the people at their will, break open house doors, carry off whatever suits them, seize pedestrians in the roads, rob and even kill them, and are also guilty of a great deal of iniquity and murdering in the towns."

CHAPTER XX

SOCIAL EFFECTS OF THE REFORMATION

Continued

Some Results of the Suppression of Monasteries in England [1]

1. Popular prejudice against monastic bodies. 2. The effect of the dissolution of monasteries on the poor. 3. Associated labor and prayer the fundamental idea of conventual existence. 4. Caricature drawn by novelists. 5. Various kinds of regulars. 6. What the great monastic houses did for the poor. 7. How the poor were robbed in the dissolution of the monasteries. 8. Consumption of the sources of charity. 9. Further social evils which befell the country. 10. Contemporary account of the state of the country. 11. Vagrant laws. 12. Degradation of the people. 13. The effect of the dissolution on education. 14. Possibility of monasteries taking part in the revival of letters. 15. The passing of parochial tithes. 16. Conclusion.

1. In entire consistency with the infamy heaped upon the monasteries has been the current estimate of the social consequences of their suppression. Grave writers no less than partisans have treated the matter as though their spoliation had resulted in great advantage to society at large, inasmuch as by it the honey was taken from the drones of the hive and handed over to the working bees. It is difficult to say which branch of this comparison is the more absolutely false to fact. Even supposing that the thousands then living under vows had led the aimless and dissipated existences attributed to them by their

[1] *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, by Francis Aidan Gasquet. Reprinted with the permission of the publishers.

despoilers, it might be asked, not without reason, whether any signal amount of private or public virtue was displayed by the courtiers and creatures of Henry VIII. If the buildings wherein the monks were housed and the churches they had raised to the glory of God were vast in extent and magnificent in design, so that, to use the words of a contemporary witness, they constituted "one of the beauties of this realm to all men and strangers passing through the same," what particular advantage accrued to the state from their desecration and wholesale destruction? If the hospitality dispensed to all comers by the monastic owners was generous and profuse, was the public interest greatly advanced by the private consumption of the very sources of that charity amongst a few royal or noble appropriators?

Such a line of argument, however, though serving fairly enough to expose the facility with which some writers, of cool judgment in other matters, accept transparent fallacies when dealing with monasticism, so far from covering the whole case, leaves room for the retort always tacitly implied, if not openly expressed, that no matter what evils may come from the suppression of the religious houses, they could not equal those which would have resulted from their continuance. Certainly had those institutions been the abodes of wickedness and strongholds of oppression depicted by the false witnesses whom our English Ahab commissioned to slander the Naboth whose fair vineyard he coveted; had the sole business of the monks consisted in extorting by spiritual intimidation, and by chicanery and fraudulent deceits, the means for living in feasting and drunkenness; had their occupation been that of wallowing in unmentionable vice — for that in plain English is the picture drawn by their spoliators — then unquestionably, whatever scars may have been in-

flicted by the cautery, they would have been incomparably more tolerable than the canker.

2. Nor, it may be here observed, is excuse altogether wanting for those who at a later day gave credence to the statements of Henry's commission without examining into the credibility of the wretched men whom modern research is denouncing to the world as perjured robbers. If such a denunciation may appear at first sight strong, even to violence, it will upon reflection be seen rather to fall short of the truth. For, although in describing the actual events the pen may, not without difficulty, be confined to a simple narration, yet when the mind contemplates the innumerable miseries entailed upon successive generations by that wholesale appropriation of the property of the Church and the poor, it is almost incompatible with any instinct of justice to refrain from characterizing in language only too abundantly justified those infamous instruments of a ruler who alone was their rival in infamy. For when we look into the case in detail and reflect, it is impossible not to see in the spoliation and destruction of the monasteries the fount and origin of many of those appalling sores in the body of the nation from which at times the veil is torn away. Not in figure merely, but in grim, literal, earnest truth, the sacred heritage of the English poor was eaten up by the house of Tudor; and to such an extent did extravagance of food, of dress, and of every kind of living ensue, that not a few of the spoilers paid in their own ruin the penalty of their transgression.

To trace in detail the consequences which this act of wholesale waste entailed upon society at large would be a task beyond the present scope; partly because such a discussion would evidently be of a magnitude exceeding the original subject, and partly because the design of the

present work is to deal with direct testimony, whereas any deductions as to the effects of this lawless act, however clearly they may be supported by evidence, must of necessity be in a measure inferential. Still, any description of the events which led up to and accompanied the suppression of these institutions, which should take no account of the important social effects which followed from it, would be imperfect.

3. Two great and fruitful ideas were kept constantly before the mind of the nation by the existence of these monastic houses — the life of perpetual praise, and the life of associated labor. *Laborare est orare* was the familiar principle which animated the course of every well-directed monastic house, and which was, so to speak, the conservation of the spiritual forces, whereby the energy of faithful work became interchangeable with the energy of unremitting prayer. With regard to the latter, it is here only needful to remark that every minister of religion finds it necessary at times to urge upon his hearers a more constant and continuous worship, rightly alleging that what is here confined to a few hours will form the whole occupation of the saints in the life to come. To carry out this principle of perpetual praise with the utmost solemnity attainable was the first end of the monastic life.

4. But though the service of God was beyond all question the prime object of monastic life, yet the more closely that life is examined the more clearly does it exhibit the element of associated labor. In the popular estimate current at the present day, and derived in great measure from those kindly misdescribers, Sir Walter Scott and the author of the "Ingoldsby Legends," it is not unusual to imagine that a monk, although possibly a pious, was at all events a very indolent personage, and that the ut-

most he accomplished was to mumble — he was always supposed to mumble — a good many more prayers than other people, and to live on the fat of the land in return.

As this conception of the monastic daily life is without doubt deeply and widely accepted, it may not be without use to inquire whether the prolonged existence of a perfectly idle and undisciplined body would even be possible. To take a case which illustrates precisely the situation popularly ascribed to the monks, imagine a college at Oxford, the fellows enjoying the revenues bequeathed for pious purposes without performing service of any sort or description in return, and living as they please, without the slightest regard to any duty imposed upon them by the founder of their statutes. Conceive that in one of these institutions the whole body of fellows, say thirty or forty in number, instead of having the liberty to go about the world as they choose and living wherever it may best suit them, should be compelled to enclosure from year's end to year's end, with nothing to do but to say their prayers within the four walls of the college! Such a condition of affairs would exactly correspond with the normal state of a monastery where vocation was overlooked, discipline not enforced, and work not exacted from the inmates. Those who know Oxford best can best conceive how long such a state of affairs would be likely to last.

In strong contrast with the caricature drawn from the imagination of novelists, who at best clothe the cloistered life with a poetic unreality, the description given of it by a deeply-read writer of modern times may be here quoted: "The monks," says Mr. Thorold Rogers, "were the men of letters in the middle ages, the historians, the jurists, the philosophers, the physicians, the students of nature, the founders of schools, authors of chronicles, teachers of

agriculture, fairly indulgent landlords and advocates of genuine dealing towards the peasantry."

5. It will be well in the first place to clear up a confusion of ideas which arises in the minds of many who have not paid particular attention to the subject, by the indiscriminate use of the word "monk" to cover all the various kinds of " regulars " in England during the middle ages. These may be first divided roughly into two classes: the more ancient orders and those which sprang up in the thirteenth century. The latter, the friars, were essentially townspeople. Their life and work consisted in preaching, teaching, hearing confessions and other such like directly spiritual ministrations, and it was from their qualifications in these matters that came their influence whether with people or king.

The Canons Regular, Austin and others, occupied a position somewhat midway between the monks and the secular clergy. Many, whilst remaining attached to their monasteries, were engaged in parochial duties, but the bulk of them still maintained a community life much like the monks themselves. The term "monks," strictly speaking, applied only to the Benedictine order in all its branches, and to the Carthusians. Even among those professing the rule of St. Benedict there is a broad line of distinction. The English black monks (Benedictines) and the white Cistercians differed in their character, work and ways. Both were great landowners, and it is true that at the time of the dissolution most if not all of the Cistercian houses seem to have approximated to the character of the Benedictine abbey. But, speaking generally, and taking in view also the preceding centuries, it may be said that the Cistercians were essentially farmers and farming their own lands themselves. This they were able to do the better through the institute of fratres conversi.

or lay brethren, which flourished among them. In course of time this system was abandoned in England; for instance, at Meaux abbey the conversi died out towards the end of the fourteenth century. But in all probability the specially industrial and agricultural character — the traditional features — of the Cistercian house remained much the same. In proportion to their income the Cistercian communities were, at least until the later years of their existence, larger than the Benedictine. In fact, complaints are not infrequent that the Cistercians admitted more members into their houses than their revenues sufficed to support. Among the English black monks the system of lay brethren, which had been successful in other countries, never took root. With them, as with the Canons Regular, the place of lay brethren was supplied by numerous paid lay servants and officers. This, if it may appear to some to have had certain disadvantages, linked them the more closely with the world about them just as the great position of the heads of the Benedictine house brought them into touch with public life. Their monasteries, apart from dependent cells, were hardly more numerous than those of the Cistercians, and even with the cells they were considerably less in number than those of the Canons Regular. But the size, importance and wealth of the Benedictine houses gave the black monks a singular pre-eminence in England. It will be seen, therefore, how different was the hereditary character of a Benedictine and Cistercian community, though both belonged, strictly speaking, to the same order, and came under the same profession. Even the atmosphere which pervaded each was different. All this is patent to anyone who compares, for example, the domestic chronicles of the Cistercian house of Meaux with those of the abbey of St. Albans.

In speaking, therefore, of the social changes effected by the dissolution of monasteries, it is these last classes, the monks and regular canons, and, of course, the nunneries, that are chiefly brought into consideration. For if their work in the Church was less exclusively one of spiritual administration than that of the friars, it was marked by a character of general helpfulness and public spirit.

6. It was the possessions of the monastic houses in particular, that, to use the words of an old writer, were popularly regarded as: "oblations to the Lord"; and "the patrimony of the poor 'to be bestowed accordingly.'" The monks whereof "taught and preached the faith and good works and practiced the same both in word and deed; not only within the monasteries but also all abroad without. . . .

"They made such provision daily for the people that stood in need thereof, as sick, sore, lame or otherwise impotent that none or very few lacked relief in one place or another. Yea, many of them, whose revenues were sufficient thereto made hospitals and lodgings within their own houses, wherein they kept a number of impotent persons with all necessaries for them, with persons to attend upon them; besides the great alms they gave daily at their gates to everyone that came for it. Yea, no wayfaring person could depart without a night's lodging, meat, drink and money; (it not) being demanded from whence he or she came and whither he would go.

"They taught the unlearned who were entrusted to them to be taught: yea the poor as well as the rich, without demanding anything for their labor, other than what the rich parents were willing to give to them of mere devotion.

"There was no person that came to them heavy or sad for any cause that went away comfortless. They

never revenged them of any injury, but were contented to forgive it freely upon submission. And if the price of corn had begun to start up in the markets they made thereunto with wainloads of corn and sold it under the market price to poor people to the end to bring down the price thereof. If the highways, bridges or causeways were tedious to the passengers that sought their living by their travel, their great help lacked not towards the repair and amending thereof; yea, oftentimes they amended them on their own proper charges.

"If any poor householder had lacked seed to sow his land or bread or corn or malt, before the harvest and came to the monastery, either of men or women, he should have had it until harvest, that he might easily have paid it again. Yea, if he had made his moan for an ox, horse or cow he might have had it upon his credit. And, such was the good conscience of the borrowers in those days, that the thing borrowed needed not to have been asked at the day of payment.

"They never raised any rent, or took any incomes or garsomes of their tenants; nor ever took in or improved any commons; although the most part and the greatest was ground belonging to their professions." . . . "All sorts of people were helped and succored by abbeys. Yea, happy was that person that was tenant to an abbey, for it was a rare thing to hear that any tenant was removed by taking his farm over his head. He was not afraid of any re-entry for non-payment of his rent, if necessity drove him thereunto. And thus they fulfilled all the works of charity in all the country round about them to the good example of all lay persons that now have taken forth other lessons, that is *nunc tempus alios postulat mores.*"

It might be objected that this is a fancy picture drawn

after date; but not merely is it the work of one who well remembered the ancient days, but it agrees entirely with the declaration of Robert Aske, written half a century before, to say nothing of so many other contemporary testimonies and well ascertained facts. Even if it were granted that in this or that detail the picture be heightened by an old man's fancy playing upon earlier memories, as a whole and in substance it is unquestionably true, and it shows the "common fame" which the monasteries left after them, a fame wholly incompatible with the infamies of later repute; for the works of Christian charity can flow from but a single source, the love of God, and love of man in Him.

7. The same writer points out how by the property obtained from the dissolutions the rich mounted up to place and power, whilst the poor, deprived of their protectors and inheritance, sank deeper into the slough of poverty. For the suppressions "made of yeomen and artificers, gentlemen, and of gentlemen, knights, and so forth upward, and of the poorest sort, stark beggars."

And the commons, he says, were robbed not only in the actual taking away, but in the consequences. For the owners, who succeeded the monks, always try "to make the most of everything," which "abbots, abbesses and such like never did." . . . "Inferior persons made gentlemen," always desiring to make a show are not "content, as other ancient gentlemen in times past did," and hence are constantly compelled to raise their rents.

Moreover, the new owners of the soil everywhere took hold of waste ground and common land. By this practice, he continues, "the poor cottager that always before might have kept a cow for sustaining himself, his wife and children and twenty sheep towards their clothing, now is not able to keep so much as a goose or hen. Yea,

the common arable fields that were common to all persons dwelling within the townships (as well the poor as the rich) are taken in and enclosed. By reason thereof the ground is worth so much that the poor cottagers, now innumerable (for in most towns for every cottage, at the time of suppression, there are five now, and far more poor persons in them), and other poor husbandmen can neither have their common therein as they had before the enclosure nor are able to pay for as much as a 'beast-gate' within it, the rent is so great. Hence only wealthy farmers with money to buy cattle can use the land; the poor class 'are brought to such poverty' that they cannot maintain their families 'and pay their landlords their rent.' "

By the enclosure of the commons the artificer in the town was no longer able to keep a cow for his household or a horse to carry his wares to market since the people's pasturage was gone. Since the fall of the abbeys "great woods" had been cut down and sold, everyone thinking of himself and "the present gain," so that the poor had great difficulty in getting wood for firing and for their various industries. By the dearth of cattle both leather and wool had become dearer. The poor, moreover, had less acknowledged right to a share of Church revenues. For, on the one hand, the married clergy supported their families out of their dues, and little could be left for those in want. And, on the other hand, the tithes "which belonged to vicarages now in temporal men's hands" were very considerable, but the owners "did not think they were more bound to contribute on this account to the poor than the others."

8. It is impossible to read any account of the work done by the monastic institutions for the poor without perceiving in how many directions this present generation

has been compelled by very necessity to devise some substitute for the consideration thus exercised. Our modern workhouses, our burial clubs, our hospitals and charities ever crying out for funds, much of which is swallowed up by paid organization and management, what are they but awkward and imperfect agencies for executing a portion of those duties to society which flowed naturally and unobtrusively from the religious communities in their ordinary practice of Christian charity?

That the wholesale uprooting of institutions so organic and so beneficent must have occasioned incalculable misery is rarely denied, though its extent is little understood. Amongst the writers who have treated this subject from the economic point of view a tolerably general consensus prevails that the condition of pauperism, as distinguished from that of poverty, may be traced distinctly to this event. Many, however, seem to consider such a condition as a kind of self-curable, if not self-engendered, disease. Even so just and usually well-informed a writer as professor Thorold Rogers expresses a doubt whether the monks did not create much of the poverty which they alleviated. Of course, to those who consider almsgiving universally and essentially objectionable, no general answer can here be given beyond observing that they who would maintain this must at least be prepared to throw over the commands of the gospel, the example of the apostles, the teaching of the Christian Church, the instincts of humanity, and the universal practice of every civilized state. And, as a matter of fact, pauperism, which immediately after became a rampant evil, was kept within bounds so long as the monasteries remained untouched.

9. But many causes were even then at work, which in all probability would have rendered, in process of time,

the old monastic methods of dealing with the evil inadequate. Still, the overthrow of the existing sources of charity, and their appropriation to quite other uses, was a fertile source of misery at the time, and up to the present. Nor is it easy to see how it could be good policy to disband corporations to whom the disposal of alms, in the spirit of Christian charity, was not merely a duty, but had become a familiar habit, and who, open as they were to the great waves of public feeling, and by tradition not unmindful of the public welfares, would not in the future have been less thrifty stewards had the need of strenuous effort and modified methods to meet a growing public evil been brought before them. This would have been easy in view of the influence which the so-called "founder" could bring to bear in every case. Not only were the channels through which all relief flowed to the people destroyed, but the very foundation head of the accumulated charity of previous generations was dried up at its source when the property of the religious houses was, without inquiry or discrimination, swept into the capacious purse of Henry. Even had the wealth acquired by the spoils of monasteries, churches, schools, and hospitals been entirely applied to useful and national purposes, it would still be true that these objects were achieved in great measure at the expense of the poorer members of the nation. As it was, a considerable part went to minister to the private wants of the king, and to enrich his noble and ignoble courtiers. They grew great, whilst the poor became "stark beggars."

Nor must it be forgotten that the process, which consumed the very sources of charity, cast many thousands upon the world without sufficient means of livelihood. Not only the numbers of monks and nuns, for whom clearly no provision was made in the way of pension, were turned

adrift to swell the ranks of the poor, but the far greater number of those dependent on the monastic houses were dismissed to find occupation or living as best they could. At the same time, the new proprietors of the abbey-lands treated the old tenants, with whom they had no sympathy, most harshly, and reduced many to a state of destitution. The monks had the character of being easy landlords, and one of the first objects of the royal agents was to rackrent the holders of the monastic farms. Thus, in his first account, John Freeman boasts that of the houses he has received in Lincolnshire, and the rental of which had been returned as £8,100 a year, "there hath been more increased by my survey, than was presented . . . yearly by £800." To give another illustration. On the granges belonging to Fountains abbey, rented at £156 13*s.* 4*d.* by the monks, the king's valuers in 1540, put in a price of £30 a year more; and thirty-five years afterwards, in 1575, Gresham's rental, without including five of the granges, was £45 7*s.* more than the whole were rented at in the royal valuation of 1540.

But beyond this consumption by the "classes" of the heritage of their poorer brethren at the time of the suppression, an additional and heavy wrong was done them by branding poverty with the mark of crime. To be poor was not before regarded as a reproach in itself, but rather upon every Christian principle poverty was held in honor. To Henry belongs the singular distinction, which few will be inclined to dispute with him, of having invented literally no less than figuratively "the Badge of Poverty," and of being the first to dress a "pauper" in a "pauper dress." It may fairly be doubted whether any single act of monarch or statesman ever did so much to vulgarize the character of an entire nation as Henry's when he bestowed nine-pence a week on each of the

thirteen poor men, hitherto supported by the monks of Gloucester, on condition that their caps and cloaks should bear a badge emblazoned with a token of the royal munificence.

10. How soon the effect of the transfer of land from the old to the new owners and the desolation it brought in its train was visible in the country may be learned from a description of the state of the land addressed to Henry VIII himself by a traveling artisan. Speaking of the great increase in the number of poor people, the writer proceeds to explain what he takes to be the causes, "for where," he says, "that your grace and your grace's predecessors have given and put in fee farm lordships to your rulers and gentlemen of your realm, whom your grace puts in trust to the intent that they should aid and defend your poor subjects and commons in all right and justice. But alas I think your poor subjects had never more need to complain unto your grace in any matter than they have in this, which if it please your grace to pardon me your subject I shall shortly show. . . .

"Your grace shall understand that I am a poor artificer or craftsman who has traveled and gone through the most part of your realm to get and earn my living. I have been in the most part of the cities and great towns of England. I have also gone through many little towns and villages, but, alas! it did pity my heart to see in every place so many monuments where houses and habitations had been, and now nothing but bare walls standing. (This), methinks, is very dishonorable unto your highness. And, not that only, but by the occasion thereof much inconvenience doth increase among your people. It causeth men to lie by the highway side and there one to rob and undo another. . . . For, if so (it) were, that every man might have in towns and villages but one little

house or cottage to inhabit, and but a little garden ground withal, they would so order it with their labor that they would earn a living, so that there should be no place untilled nor without inhabitants. . . .

"Now if it please your grace to hear what is the cause of such decay and ruin within your realm, your grace shall understand that in every place where your grace's majesty hath given in fee farm any lordship to any gentleman, or such as be your grace's fee farmers, (they) should let them again unto your poor subjects to inhabit and till, that they paying their rent truly to their lords might have a sufficient and complete living by their labor.

"But alas! how far are these fee farmers or rulers wide in either point. For if so be that any of these fee farmers have any tenement or farm in their hands, if a poor man come unto any of them desiring him to be good unto him in this tenement or farm that he might have it to inhabit, paying the rent for it as it hath been before time; he answers and saith, 'if thou wilt have this tenement of me thou must pay me so much money at your coming in for a fine'; so that he raiseth what never was at any fine before, to a great sum of money, and the rent to be paid yearly besides. The poor (man) then seeing there is no remedy but either to have it or be destitute of an habitation sells all he hath from wife and children to pay the fine. Then the landlord perceiving the house in decay will not repair it, although the tenant paid ever so much for his fine, and the tenant comes to a decayed thing. Then the landlord perceiving that the house is ready to fall down calls the tenant into court and there commands him to build up his house before a certain day under pain of forfeiting a certain sum of money. Then the poor man, because he paid so great a sum of money

for the fine is not able to build up his house so quickly. Then a second time he is called up again to the court and there commanded under pain of forfeiting his tenement to build it so that the poor man being not able to repair it forfeits again unto the lord.

"And now because it is so far in decay and the fine so great withal, no one is desirous to take it so that the house cometh down shortly after. 'Yet,' saith the landlord, 'the lands shall raise me as much rent as they did before when the house was standing.' Oh, good lord! how much more do these men regard their own peculiar and proper advantage than your grace's honor or (care) where your people should inhabit. . . .

"Your grace may see how hard-hearted they are unto their tenants that they rather let (houses) fall than build. Is it not a pitiful thing to come into a little village town where there have been twenty or thirty houses and now one-half of them nothing but bare walls standing? Is it not a pitiful thing to see one man have in his hand what sufficed (for) two or three men when the habitations were standing? No doubt this thing is the cause of much inconvenience within your realm."

11. In later times still the evils here recorded were intensified, and the poverty of the nation at large could not be disguised. Everywhere we read of a host of mendicants, of thieves, of vagabonds, so that for one beggar in the reign of Henry there were a hundred in the days of Elizabeth. Then those who had seized the inheritance proclaimed the poverty of those they had robbed a crime. Merciless and monstrous statutes enacted by the spoliators was the remedy by which it was sought to reduce the disease, and the rulers of the state did not shrink from introducing slavery, and inflicting even death for the crime of poverty, of which they had been the patent origin.

12. Hundreds of men and women, whose birthright had been divided amongst the rich and powerful, were cast into prison, scourged, and reduced to the condition of slaves, or hanged for the crime of going about the country to seek a livelihood or for asking an alms when failing to find employment in the midst of the general distress and the disorders of national bankruptcy.

The effect of Henry's policy in dividing the monastic estates among his courtiers was in reality to create a monopoly in land. So long as they remained in the hands of their rightful owners, those corporations not being subject to demise, dealt with the tenants according to immemorial custom, and never aimed at extorting the last penny of profit from the cultivator. But the new grantees were not actuated by a like consideration and rents were everywhere increased.

This was tantamount to nothing less than a revolution effected by the powerful against the weak. "The further we look back into history," says Mr. J. S. Mill, speaking especially in regard to rent, "the more we see all transactions and engagements under the influence of fixed customs. The reason is evident. Custom is the most powerful protector of the weak against the strong; their sole protector where there are no laws or government adequate to the purpose. Custom is a barrier which even in the most oppressed condition of mankind tyranny is forced in some degree to respect." But in the revolutionary proceedings of Henry's reign no degree of respect was paid to custom, and, that protecting barrier thrown down, the weak were left to the mercy of the powerful.

The results of the dissolution were not merely felt in the country parts. They affected the fishing population of the coasts. Many monasteries had their own fishponds, but others purchased fish in large quantities, for

transit was not in those days so difficult as might be imagined. In the old days when the fishermen returned to port with loaded smacks they found a market and ready-money for what they had to sell in the religious houses. After the dissolution this market was suddenly withdrawn and the fisheries declined.

13. If the effects of the dissolution were felt to operate in prejudice to the material comfort of the people, the blow inflicted on higher interests was still more fatal. Of course, as regards religion itself the Protestant must be bound to consider that, however grievously spiritual interests may have suffered, yet the substitution of Protestantism for Catholicity outweighs all other considerations. But learning, sacred and secular, is a more neutral ground, on which both Catholic and Protestant may meet. Deterioration was felt in all grades of education, from the university downwards. The rise in rents, says Latimer, prevented the yeoman sending his son to school. Most of the schools, at this time, were closed, without any provision being made for a substitute. Moreover, the monasteries and convents had supported scholars at the universities, or provided for young clerics until their ordination, when they supplied them with a title. This change was felt immediately. At Cambridge the scholars, in 1545, petitioned king Henry for privileges, as they feared the destruction of monasteries would altogether annihilate learning. At Oxford, as is well known, the result was no less fatal, and for a time these great homes of learning were threatened with nothing less than ruin. At the very moment of the suppression the danger was foreseen, and to meet the case it was enjoined that every clergyman beneficed to the amount of £100 a year or more should find "an exhibition to maintain one scholar or more either at grammar schools or at one of the universities."

It is, however, clear that this injunction had no more effect than that laid on the new owners of monastic lands to keep up the hospitality always maintained by their predecessors.

Looking back from the days of Edward VI to the times before the suppression, Bishop Latimer exclaimed: "In those days what did they when they helped the scholars? Marry! they maintained and gave them livings that were very papists and professed the pope's doctrine; and now that the knowledge of God's Word is brought to light, and many earnestly study and labor to set it forth, now almost no man helpeth to maintain them."

"Truly," he said, in another sermon, "it is a pitiful thing to see schools so neglected; every true Christian ought to lament the same . . . to consider what hath been plucked from abbeys, colleges and chantries, it is marvel no more to be bestowed upon this holy office of salvation. It may well be said by us that the Lord complaineth by His prophet. . . . 'My house ye have deserted, and ye run everyone to his own house.' . . . Schools are not maintained; scholars have not exhibitions. . . . Very few there be that help poor scholars. . . . It would pity a man's heart to hear that, that I hear of the state of Cambridge; what it is in Oxford I cannot tell. . . . I think there be at this day (A. D. 1550) ten thousand students less than were within these twenty years and fewer preachers."

So far as Oxford is concerned, "most of the halls and hostels," writes Anthony Wood, "were left empty. Arts declined and ignorance began to take place again."

14. It is vain to speculate on what might have been. But it is certain that the progress of sound learning represented by such men as Warham, More, Colet, and their friends was arrested. In view of the monasteries as they

actually were and the tendencies clearly perceptible among some of the most important in the last decades of their existence, what might not have been hoped from them for the promotion of letters had events been allowed to take their natural course? It might be objected, although there is no ground in the facts to countenance such an objection, that the monasteries could have had no part in this new movement. But objectors such as these fail to take into account the capacity of the monastic order to adapt itself to new circumstances, and that wonderful recuperative power, which is one of the most prominent as it is one of the most interesting features of monastic history.

It may suffice to adduce a single example. At the close of the sixteenth century the Benedictine monasteries of France were in a condition which can only be described as deplorable. An attempt had been made at reform, but the houses which had joined Chezal Benoist might be counted on the fingers of one hand; the attempt had ended in failure. But within less than half a century the congregations of Saint Maur and Saint Vannes extended from one end of the country to the other. They numbered nearly two hundred monasteries, and the foundations were already firmly laid for what is one of the largest and purest literary and religious glories of modern times.

15. One other serious result of the monastic suppression cannot be passed over without some notice. A large proportion of the conventual revenues was derived from parochial tithes impropriated to monasteries and convents. However great an abuse it may be considered to transfer such dues from one object to another, these tithes were granted in the first instance for charitable and other strictly ecclesiastical purposes. On the sup-

pression of the religious houses no distinction was made between monastic revenues derived from this source and from the ordinary estates. Tithes were thus granted away and sold like the fee simple of the land to laymen, and converted altogether to secular purposes. "These impropriations were in no one instance, I believe," writes Hallam, "restored to the parochial clergy, and have passed either into the hands of laymen, or of bishops and other ecclesiastical persons who were frequently compelled by the Tudor princes to take them in exchange for lands."

"By having these parsonages," writes Spelman, "they (the lay impropriators) are charged with cure of souls; and make themselves subject to the burden that lieth so heavily upon the head of every minister, to see the service of God performed, the people instructed, the poor relieved; for to these three ends and the maintenance of ministers were parsonages instituted; as not only the canons of the Church but the books of the law and particularly the statutes of Richard II and Henry IV do manifestly testify. And no man may have them but to these purposes, neither were they otherwise given to the king by the statute of dissolution than in as large and ample a manner as the governors of those religious houses had them, nor by him conveyed otherwise to his subjects." Thus the tithes passed to the lay grantees of Henry, together with all their burdens and responsibilities. It is to be feared that no such duties have been recognized by the possessors of this ecclesiastical property which thus practically was lost to the Church at the dissolution.

16. Such are some of the momentous social results of that great event. They may be summed up in a few words. The creation of a large class of poor to whose

poverty was attached the stigma of crime; the division of class from class, the rich mounting up to place and power, the poor sinking to lower depths; destruction of custom as a check upon the exactions of landlords; the loss by the poor of those foundations at schools and universities intended for their children, and the passing away of ecclesiastical tithes into the hands of lay owners.

CHAPTER XXI

SOCIAL WORK OF THE MISSIONS

1. Broad vision of the social worker. 2. Exemplification of preventive work. 3. Social work and religion. 4. Success of the missionaries. 5. Training the missionary. 6. South America. 7. Franciscans in Mexico. 8. The Indian in North and South America. 9. The Reductions of Paraguay. 10. Jesuits called to the missions. 11. Social progress. 12. Politics and Indians. 13. Cupidity of Spain and Portugal. 14. Missions in Brazil. 15. China and Japan. 16. Missions and the future of humanity. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. Social workers in our day are required to have a broad vision; they must see beyond the narrow circle of the family and even the community or city, and help to solve the difficulties which are of interest to us as a people. Moreover there loom up before us problems of an international character; the Red Cross has been called upon to minister not only to our own people, but to the stricken communities of Europe and Asia Minor and Japan. It has often been remarked that the social ideals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were exceedingly low; it is refreshing, therefore, to study one of the activities of those two centuries — an activity which ramified into every uncivilized nation of the world. We refer to the work of the missions.

2. The present day interpretation of social work is that it should be preventive. In the field of health we are no longer content to cure typhoid or tuberculosis; we have found the cause of the dread diseases and have

used our information to prevent their dissemination. Christian missionary work has measured up to the strictest demands of preventive measures. The missionaries were not content to correct moral and physical wrongs, but they sought for the roots of evil and set to work to eradicate them. The ghastly offering of human sacrifices in Mexico; the lowest forms of cannibalism among the aborigines of both North and South America and the islands of the Pacific; the inhuman treatment of Indian women condemned to do the drudgery of camp and field work; the awful scourge of smallpox; the revolting and superstitious religious ceremonies which held such fascination for the untutored mind — these are only a few of the terrible social curses which the missionary encountered. Not only did he prevent the abuses as far as in him lay, but he legislated for future social conditions in which these evils would not be tolerated. His work was truly prophylactic. By patient teaching and example he prepared the convert for the duties of his Christian life, and made of him a useful, interested, and intelligent member of the new life of a Christian citizen.

3. Throughout this book we have endeavored to point out that social work, while secondary to religion, is a necessary outcome of true religious progress. This principle applies to the work of missionaries among heathens and savages. Wherever the Gospel was preached there not only resulted a higher moral life, but everywhere there was an increase in the knowledge of those things which tend to promote social and civic progress. In fact, the missionaries generally began with social work; and it was only after they had gained the good-will and confidence of their neophytes by patience and service that they brought to them the higher truths of Christianity. In our own day the various Protestant denominations are

following this method, and owing to it they have reaped a harvest in such countries as China and Japan. Protestant missionary societies have expended enormous sums in building primary schools, colleges, and hospitals, and have proved by their superior educational methods that Christianity has something worth while to give to the pagan.

4. So great was the success of missionaries among the pagan and savage nations that the story has all the elements of romance. In South America we behold a whole continent of savages changed into Christian people. In Paraguay, for instance, we marvel at the results when we behold fierce cannibals converted in a few decades and settling down into communities which rival in fervor the churches of early Christianity. In writing upon the subject, Macaulay, the English historian, claimed that the Church, by her millions of converts in the New World and in the Orient, had more than compensated for the loss of the Protestant nations of Europe. In this chapter we shall limit our treatment to the social phase of missionary work, with the reminder, however, that it was but the natural outcome of the teaching of Christianity, and that it could not have been accomplished apart from the message of the Gospel.

5. Pope Urban VIII was among the first to recognize the importance of the training of missionaries. There were seminaries for this purpose at Milan, Lyons, and Paris; and in the latter city was the famous Society of Foreign Missions. The religious orders trained some of their members for the foreign missions. It is impossible at present to collect data in regard to the amount of money expended in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on missionaries and mission work. Most of the contributions came through individual donations, and

people of the times were not interested in keeping records of the amount of money given; their offerings were not for publication nor the approval of their neighbors; but given to God, and they knew that He would remember. It is sufficient to recall that the missionaries traversed entire continents and that few nations, even the smallest and most savage, were overlooked in this apostolic period. Spain and Portugal were the first nations to reach the settlements of the New World, and with the explorer and the trader there was always found the missionary.

6. Social and political conditions were far from ideal. At times the bands of conquering Spaniards were composed of a class of men who held the subdued nations in contempt, robbed them of their gold, and tortured them to force from them a confession of hidden treasures. Slavery was introduced and became one of the curses of the land. However, great leaders like Las Casas and later on St. Peter Claver undid much of the evil which resulted from the cruelty of the invaders. Again, if we compare the condition of the countries under the Spaniards with what it was under the native rulers, there can be no doubt of the social benefit which came to the New World. In Mexico twenty thousand young men and women, the pride and hope of the race, were yearly offered in sacrifice to the idols. The historian Prescott has given us but a fanciful picture of the glory of the Incas and Montezuma. The latter was a savage and frightful monster who offered up untold human beings to his cruel gods. All this terrible sacrifice of human life came to an end with the advent of the Spaniard. The general results of the coming of the Spaniard were most favorable. Luckily the conqueror brought with him the missionary who checked his cruelty and protected the Indian from his cupidity.

7. Let us begin with the missionary activities in Mexico. Only a few years after the conquest of the country by Cortez missionary work among the natives was undertaken in a most systematic way. In 1524 a band of twelve Franciscans entered upon the work of converting the natives. By their devotedness they won the esteem of the Mexicans and were soon able to gain them over to the teachings of Christianity. Throughout the land they constructed churches and convents. The greatest hope lay in the instruction of the children, who were not only taught the elements of religion in their native language, but soon learned the useful trades, and later became the builders of new settlements. In 1531 there were a hundred Franciscans and Dominicans laboring in the country. Three years later there was a college at Santa Cruz, with sixty students. By the year 1551 more than a hundred thousand converts had been made. In 1553 there were three colleges in the country, and this year saw the beginning of the University of Mexico. In 1575 the Augustinians and Jesuits arrived upon the scene, and before the century had passed, the greater part of the country had become Christianized.

8. When we compare the United States with Mexico and the South American countries, we are apt to forget that our civilization was transplanted here from Europe. Our treatment of the Indians was cruel, and our early settlers did little to bring the blessings of religion and civilization to the original inhabitants. In Mexico and South America a different policy was pursued. Every effort was made to civilize and Christianize the inhabitants, with the result that we find in those countries teeming millions of their descendants. They have not the culture which we have and which we inherited; but compared with our Indians they are far superior in every way,

and in many instances they rival our own progress. During the last hundred years, following the period of the revolution in which these nations broke away from Spain, much of the work of the missionaries has been undone, and countries which were peaceful and prosperous have been the prey of political tyrants.

9. Perhaps in no other mission does social work stand out as prominently as in the Indian settlements of Paraguay in South America. The conversion of these fierce tribes has been called by the scoffing Voltaire a triumph of humanity; and Marshall, the well-known authority, does not hesitate to speak of the Paraguay Reductions as "perhaps the noblest mission which the Christian religion ever founded since the days of the Apostles." [1] When the Spaniards first came in contact with the Indians of Paraguay, they found the natives among the fiercest which they had encountered. Notable among them were the Moxos Indians, who spurned every kind of food except human flesh. To fall into their hands meant a terrible death by torture; and so fiercely did they fight that even the brave Spanish conquerors were checked in their hitherto dauntless career. However, the missionaries succeeded where the Spanish warriors failed, and in less than a century and a half more than a million converts were made. The mission settlements were called Reductions, and extended from Bolivia to Patagonia and from the Atlantic to the Andes.

10. Don Francisco Victoria, a Dominican friar and bishop of Tucuman, invited the Jesuits, in 1586, to undertake missions in the southern part of South America. The first work of the missionaries was to master the dialects of the various tribes. Later they published numerous grammars and dictionaries which were of in-

[1] *Christian Missions*, Vol. II, p. 193.

estimable value for those who later came into the field. The toll was heavy, and more than one martyr found his crown as each succeeding year went by. One missionary, Christoval de Mendoza, during his active career baptized ninety-five thousand converts; but his work did not equal that of Cyprian Baraza, who labored among the cannibal Moxos for twenty-seven years. He seemed to possess a charmed life, and walked among them undisturbed. He shared their lodgings and their work, and aroused their interest and curiosity by teaching them to weave. When he died in 1702 he left fifteen colonies as the result of his labors. Dominicans and Franciscans entered the field and made numerous converts.

11. In these missions of Paraguay, not only were the terrible abuses and superstitions eradicated, but everywhere the foundation was laid for model Christian communities. Here we have an example of ideal social work which not only sought to correct evils, but was characterized by a wonderful foresight in preventive measures. The progress in social life among these Indian tribes was almost unbelievable, and before many decades had passed we behold these Indians rivaling in their achievements the nations of Europe. Soon there came an active commerce between the missions of Spain and Portugal, and two thousand boats plied the Parana. The new Reductions produced an excellent quality of cotton; and we are surprised at the finest quality of cloth that was woven by the native women. The men became not only good agriculturists and herdsmen, but some of the missions owned thirty thousand sheep and one hundred thousand head of cattle. The natives became butchers, bakers, and tanners; they were tailors, weavers, and dyers; they were artists, woodcarvers, and workers in metal; they were printers and gilders; they con-

structed mills and built irrigation dams; they cast bells and built organs and constructed churches which still excite the amazement of the modern visitor. And we are assured by the authority of competent writers that they enjoyed more comfort than was found in many of the Spanish colonies. Southey, who is by no means a partial writer, wrote that "they enjoyed a greater exemption from physical and moral evils than any other inhabitants of the globe." Schools were everywhere; and not only did the native children master the elements of knowledge, but the more advanced students learned Spanish and Latin.

12. In reference to this success of the missionaries, the question may be asked: Would not the Spanish and Portuguese governments have attained the same end through political means? We have only to turn to our own country, where money was spent so lavishly and under such favorable conditions, to discover that civil power is inadequate to cope with the difficulties of bringing civilization to rude original tribes. One of the most reliable statements in this regard was made by Senator Vest during the discussion of the Indian Appropriation Bill before the United States Senate in 1900:

"I was raised a Protestant," he said; "I expect to die one. I was never in a Catholic church in my life, and I have not the slightest sympathy with many of its dogmas; but above all I have no respect for the insane fear that the Catholic Church is about to overturn this Government. I should be ashamed to call myself an American if I indulged in any such ignorant belief.

"I said that I was a Protestant. I was reared in the Scotch Presbyterian Church; my father was an elder in it, and my earliest impressions were that the Jesuits had horns and hoofs and tails, and that there was a faint

tinge of sulphur in the circumambient air whenever one of them crossed your path. Some years ago I was assigned by the Senate to examine the Indian schools in Wyoming and Montana. I visited every one of them. I wish to say now what I have said before in the Senate, and it is not the popular side of the question by any means, that I did not see in all my journey a single school that was doing any educational work worthy of the name educational work unless it was under the control of the Jesuits.

"I did not see a single government school, especially day schools, where there was any work done at all. The Jesuits have elevated the Indian wherever they have been allowed to do so without the interference of bigotry and fanaticism and the cowardice of politicians. They have made him a Christian, have made him a workman able to support himself and those dependent on him. Go to the Flathead Reservation in Montana and look at the work of the Jesuits, and what do you find? Comfortable dwellings, herds of cattle and horses, self-respecting Indians. I am not afraid to say this, because I speak from personal observation, and no man ever went among these Indians with more intense prejudice than I had when I left the city of Washington to perform that duty. Every dollar you give to the government day schools might as well be thrown into the Potomac under a ton of lead."[1]

13. The rulers of Spain and Portugal often encouraged missionary enterprises, but they were at times found willing to sacrifice whole colonies of Indians for selfish purposes; and even when they had the best of intentions towards the natives, their designs were often frustrated by unscrupulous representatives. The missionaries found their white fellow companions more of a hindrance than

[1] *Congressional Records*, Apr. 7, 1900, p. 7, 4120.

a help. So often were the poor Indians oppressed or enslaved that they regarded the white intruders as their enemies; they looked with suspicion upon the missionaries who came into their midst, and even murdered them under the plea that they were representatives of the civil power. Even when the missions had attained a wonderful success and reductions were spread all over the land, much of the good work was ruined by the cupidity of Spain and Portugal. The frontiers separating Spanish and Portuguese colonies were not definite, and frequently the Portuguese from Brazil found a pretext to invade the Spanish colonies of the south and to rob the poor Indians and destroy their villages.

About the middle of the eighteenth century Spain ceded to Portugal a large tract of land along the east shore of the Uruguay River. For years reports had been circulated that the country contained vast deposits of gold and that the Jesuits were enriching themselves, not only by mining, but by taking to themselves the profits of the labor of the thousands of Indians who worked in the reductions. It was the same cry that went up against the Franciscans a century later in the missions of California — the merest pretext of the Mexican Government to rob the poor Indians who had built up the wonderful missions along the Pacific coast. As soon as the Portuguese came into possession of the country, they gave orders to the thirty thousand Christian Indians to abandon the land and seek homes elsewhere. In vain did the Jesuits plead for the poor Indians. Every effort was made by the Portuguese to convince the Indians that their supposed Jesuit friends and instructors had turned traitors and had sought their deportation. At this period of the history of the missions the Indians were well armed and drilled. The recourse to arms had been made necessary,

owing to the frequent attacks of the savage tribes and of slave traffickers formed of the lowest element of the settlers.

At a word from their Jesuit directors the Indians could have risen up and overpowered the Portuguese oppressors. But they obeyed their religious teachers, and only a few hundred took up arms against the invaders, whereas it would have been an easy matter to send a force of fifty thousand men. It would require years for this great body of Indians to find homes in the more remote parts of the country; and yet they were ordered to leave their villages within thirty days. The sad tragedy of this terrible disaster came when the Portuguese vainly sought for the supposed gold mines in the country from which they had expelled the Indian inhabitants. The place became a curse and a byword; and the Portuguese pleaded with the Spaniards to enter upon another treaty and to take back the land from which the Indians had been driven. This is but one of many instances which could be cited to show the superiority of missionaries over the secular power in the conversion and civilization of savage peoples.

14. In condemning the policies of Spain and Portugal for cruelty towards the inhabitants, we find an exception in John III of Portugal, who was not only instrumental in sending missionaries to India and other countries of the Far East, but in 1549 dispatched Emmanuel de Nobrega and five other Jesuit missionaries to work among the savages of Brazil. These missionaries encountered the lowest form of cannibals, and showed their heroic bravery by snatching away from the savages the bodies which they were preparing to devour. They opposed the Portuguese who sought to enslave the poor savages. Among the missionaries of Brazil the name of

Joseph Anchieta stands out prominently. He possessed literary talents of the highest order, and composed an epic poem in the midst of the solitudes of the forest, where he had neither pen nor paper, but retained the entire production in his most retentive memory. He made himself the servant and almost the very slave of the wretched Indians; he shared their sufferings and toils, and by his unremitting service won their love and devotion, so that they became pliant as children under his guidance. In 1597, when Anchieta died, there were one hundred and twenty other Jesuits laboring in Brazil.

In the course of this half-century all the natives along the coastline, extending for nearly two thousand miles, were converted and collected together in Christian villages. The success of the missionaries in lower Brazil rivals that of the better known reductions of Paraguay. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the work of Christianizing the people had so advanced that the whole country had been divided into five archbishoprics and twenty-seven bishoprics. Scattered through the country were four hundred monasteries, each with its school, its foundry, its mill, its place for spinning and weaving. The young Indian children were taught to read, to cipher and sing, to sow and to reap, to plant trees and build houses; so that in a few years the missions were not only independent of the mother country, but were able to carry on a fruitful commerce with Portugal. In viewing this wonderful growth, the Protestant historian Ranke could not but exclaim: "The proud edifice of the Catholic Church was completely reared in South America." Magnificent cathedrals had sprung up, the most splendid one at Los Angeles rivaling in its beauty the sacred edifices of the Old World. The work was often disturbed, not only by those in power and the lowest element among the

Portuguese, but in the middle of the seventeenth century Dutch pirates landed in many places and sought to destroy the missions. However, they were beaten off by the natives with but little help from the Portuguese soldiers.

15. One of the most interesting chapters in early missionary history is the work in China. We can only refer briefly to the results of this endeavor. Francis Xavier, the apostle of India and Japan, vainly sought to gain an entrance into the country, but he died, in 1552, within sight of the land to which he had hoped to bring the message of the Gospel. The design was not abandoned, and in 1583 the Jesuit missionary Ricci landed in China and for twenty-seven years labored in that country. He adopted the garb of the Literates and mastered the purest dialect, so that the Mandarins wondered at the knowledge which he had of their own language. For years he worked at Canton, where he converted many eminent Mandarins; but he knew that he must reach Pekin and get the ear of the emperor if he wished to make his work a lasting one. By his knowledge of mathematics he soon won the admiration of the most learned scholars of the country. In fact, he soon discovered that much of their knowledge was only a pretense, and among the best mathematicians he could not find one who was able to calculate an eclipse. After winning the favor of the emperor and receiving the royal sanction to preach Christianity, he succeeded in converting thousands, and at the end of his career left behind him more than three hundred churches. In 1627 Father Alexander de Rhodes began his wonderful career in Tong-King, and in three years he and his companions converted over six thousand of the pagans. Among these converts were many noble bonzes, who became zealous and adept catechists and carried the message of Christianity into

many quarters where the priests could not gain admission. Other missionaries, including the Dominicans, Franciscans and Lazarists, arrived upon the scene. In 1750 the Jesuits had 120,000 converts; the Lazarists 80,000; the mission of the Propaganda 30,000; the Dominicans 20,000; making a total of 250,000 converts in this single section of the great empire. After Ricci, Adam Schaal and Ferdinand Verviest were most instrumental in carrying on the work of the missions. The latter landed in China in 1671, and by his knowledge of mathematics and astronomy not only won over many of the leading Mandarins, but converted them to Christianity.

16. Few subjects will offer a wider field for social investigation and study than the history of the Christian missions. While we have recorded some of the achievements of the past centuries, we are conscious of the fact that the missions remain one of the great social problems of the future. Moreover, when we contemplate the non-Christian world, we are convinced that we must gain the teeming nations to Christian ideals or we must later meet them in open warfare. History has recorded the efforts of these pagan people to overrun the Christian world; and we pause in breathless silence when we consider the narrow margin which separated success from failure. Will these nations again gather power, and, if they are not dominated by Christian ideals, will they repeat the inroads of the Huns and Vandals, or those of the Turks of later centuries? The missions, then, apart from their religious and social aspects, have a potent power for the good of humanity. Remember that armies and politics cannot bring about the redemption of these peoples; only one influence can save them — that of the Christian missionary.

Again, when we behold the stupendous task that yet remains, we must admit that we face the greatest social problem of our age. Three-fourths of the human race is still pagan; over 800,000,000 heathen, and 200,000,000 Mohammedans are still in superstition. In Asia, the birthplace of Christianity, there are scarcely 5,500,000 Catholics against over 700,000,000 pagans. Africa has still 150,000,000 heathen and only 1,500,000 Catholics. China has almost 400,000,000 pagans against 2,000,000 Catholics; and Japan but 70,000 of our faith.

India's heathen number over 300,000,000. For one Catholic there are over a hundred pagans. In Hindustan, which is only one-third as large as the United States, there are about 67,000,000 Mohammedans. In the Dutch East Indies we have over 35,000,000 heathen and only 55,000 Catholics. China has only 2,300 priests for her 400,000,000 souls; one priest for 175,000 people; one priest for every 650 square miles; while New York State has one priest for 3,400 people; one priest for every fifteen square miles! Japan, the power of the Orient, has only one Catholic for every ninety-five pagans; one priest for every 250,000 people. For the 10,000,000 Catholics of the Philippine Islands there are only about 1,200 priests; one priest has to care for 10,000 Catholics! In the United States there are only 300,000 Catholic negroes, while 6,000,000 are still practically pagans. For every negro Catholic in Africa there are over a hundred pagans.

The figures given above have an appalling meaning. In every age there is a social problem — one which is more pressing or threatening, or more difficult to solve than any other problem; it is called the social question. In the early ages of Christianity slavery was the social question; in the Middle Ages usury and leprosy were the social questions; at the present day, some regard the

inequality which arises from capitalism as the social question, while others believe that divorce is the social question. But when we consider that neither trade nor politics can civilize and convert the millions of pagan people, and that the Church through her missionaries must do this work, if it is ever to be done, may we not put down the foreign misssions as the social question of the day? Our own Christian civilization will always be threatened unless it draws to itself the unenlightened heathen people of foreign lands; the missionary, and he alone, will be able to unite the Christian civilization with the heathens of other countries. Missionary work must have for its primary object the conversion of the unbeliever to the religion of Christ; but there must result from this message of salvation a higher social order.

Topics and Questions for Reading and Discussion

1. Why would you classify missionaries among social workers?
2. Can such countries as China and Japan, without the blessings of Christianity, reach a civilization equal to that of Christian nations?
3. Are we sure that Christianity will bring social blessings to pagan countries?
4. A well-known writer has said that it would be just as well to leave the African tribes in their pagan and savage state. What comments have you to make on this statement?
5. Did the missionaries of the sixteenth century have the same ideals as those of the early Benedictines?
6. Did the later missionaries, like the Benedictines, begin with social work?
7. Did the missionaries of the sixteenth century regard social work as only secondary?
8. On the supposition that social work was made secondary to religion, would the progress of social work be impeded?
9. How do you explain the fact that in Mexico, South America, and the Philippines the original stock has grown into nations with

millions of people, while the American Indians have decreased in number?

10. Why is it unfair to compare the white population in the United States with the populations of mixed blood in Mexico and South America?

11. Has a political power ever been able to civilize a nation?

12. Gather some statistics in regard to present-day missions.

13. Our study does not embrace mission work in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But it may be of interest to compare the Protestant and Catholic missions of this period. In the building of schools and hospitals and other social centers the Protestant denominations have been able to accomplish much, and their influence in such countries as China and Japan has been very great. But the Catholic missionary has been called upon to make greater sacrifices; and not being burdened with a family, he has been able to penetrate distant countries and bring the message of the Gospel to the most forsaken peoples. The Catholic missionary is regarded as a bearer of a new message of salvation; the Protestant as a representative of some social agency.

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CHAPTER XXII

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, SOCIAL ORGANIZER

1. Social condition of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. 2. Early life and labors of St. Vincent de Paul. 3. Social organization at Chatillon. 4. Directions for the association. 5. Preventive work. 6. Ladies of Charity. 7. Work in the prisons. 8. Abandoned children. 9. Sisters of Charity. 10. Rules for the new association. 11. Bougaud's testimony in regard to the Sisters of Charity. 12. Organizing the men of France. 13. Meeting financial obligations. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. France, like the other countries of Europe, suffered from the social calamities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; but great as were the sufferings of the people at the beginning of the seventeenth century, they were intensified by the terrible scourge known as the Thirty Years War (1618 to 1648). The starving poor flocked to the cities; and even those who had led honorable and useful lives were driven by desperation to deeds of violence. Respectable citizens were terrified by the advent of the army of hungry and ragged beggars. Many hospitals where the wayfarers found food and shelter were disorganized or closed, and asylums could no longer care for orphans. We have instances of inhuman brutes, who disfigured abandoned children and carried them through the streets to force alms from the horrified people. If we turn to the prisons, we find the inmates bound to the walls with chains, covered with vermin, and fed the coarsest food. But, above all, the condition of the criminals condemned to work in the galleys was most deplorable. Literally they were slaves, chained to their

seats in the warships, exposed to heat and cold, to rain and storm, poorly fed, and treated with the greatest inhumanity; and, though their fate often called forth a protest, but little alleviation resulted.

2. Into this period of misery and want came the gentle and loving St. Vincent de Paul. But he was more than gentle and loving; he was a born leader, a careful and far-sighted organizer; he foresaw needs, gave inspiration, and aroused enthusiasm; he not only met the problems of his day, but he built so well and solidly that his works have come down to us as a bright inheritance. We can learn from him how to meet many a social condition of the present.

St. Vincent de Paul was born in 1589 in Pouy, a small town of France. His parents were poor, and the family house in which he spent his infancy still stands to bear witness to the privations of his early youth. Like many another great man he owed some of his finer qualities to the care and inspiration of his mother. By dint of work and tutoring he managed to spend seven years at the University of Toulouse in France, received his degree in theology, and was ordained to the holy priesthood in 1600. He had the happy quality so necessary to one in his position of profiting and learning by experience; and many were the occasions of storing up useful knowledge for his lifework. His spiritual ministrations were among the poor; but while he cared for their souls, he did not neglect to bring material help to all in want. In 1605, with other passengers, he was seized by Turkish pirates off the southern coast of France, and sold as a slave in the market of Tunis. For two years he was in servitude, deprived of all the consolations of religion, but he converted his master to Christianity and with him escaped to Europe.

3. We cannot delay upon his work as a priest during the following ten years. In 1617 we find him as curé in the village of Chatillon. One Sunday morning, when vesting for mass, he was asked to announce that a certain family was in want. Not only did he make the announcement, but he set to work to form an association among the women of the parish to visit the sick and suffering and to care for their wants. This was the beginning of his organized efforts of charity — a scientific charity, as we shall see. For his Association of Charity in the little parish of Chatillon he drew up rules which have happily been preserved. These regulations contain a lesson even for our own specialized endeavors, when we are only too apt to overlook the spiritual element in our ministrations. He first required that only those were to be assisted whose condition had been thoroughly investigated by three members of the association. The one to whom the case was assigned was to adhere to the following rules:

4. "The lady who visits shall get the nourishment from the treasurer, cook it, and, bringing it to the invalids, cheerfully and kindly salute them on entering their apartment. She shall arrange the tray on the bed, spreading a napkin over it, and placing on it a glass, spoon, and bread roll. Next she shall wash the sick person's hands, say grace, and then, having poured out the soup and put the meat on a plate, she shall arrange all on the tray. She shall kindly invite the sick person to eat, for the love of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, doing all in a spirit of love, as if dealing with her own child, or rather with God Himself, who regards as done to Himself what is done to the poor. While conversing in this spirit about our Lord, she shall try to cheer the invalid if downcast, cutting his food and pouring out the drink.

Thus having set things going, if there is any one at hand, she shall leave the rest to him, and go on to the next sick person, whom she shall treat in the same way. She shall remember always to begin with those who have somebody to help them, and to finish with those who have nobody, so as to be able to remain a longer time with them. In the evening she shall return with the supper, and go through the same arrangements as before.

"Each invalid shall receive as much bread as is necessary, with a quarter of a pound of mutton or boiled veal for dinner, and as much roast for supper, except on Sundays and feasts, when boiled chicken shall be given, and two or three times a week mince pie. Those who have no fever may get a pint of wine every day, half in the morning and half in the evening.

"And since the object of this institution is not only to assist the poor corporally, but also spiritually, the members shall endeavor and make it their aim to dispose those whom they succor to lead better lives, and prepare for death those who are dying, directing their visits to this end, and frequently asking God in prayer for the same object. The dead shall be buried at the expense of the association, the ladies obtaining a shroud and purchasing a grave if the deceased had no means. They shall assist at the funerals if convenient, acting as mothers who follow their children to the grave." [1]

5. It may be objected that there was nothing scientific in this program; the work was not preventive; it did not seek to get at the cause of the evils and to apply remedies. But consider the wonderful work of the Red Cross and other associations in Russia. Did they not first seek to help and save those upon whom the terrible calamities had fallen? So it was with the work of

[1] Bougaud's *History of St. Vincent de Paul*, Vol. I, p. 66.

St. Vincent de Paul. Suffering called for immediate action; but he did not work blindly or forget the future. He divided the poor into four classes: (*a*) The children, the aged, the sick, and others who could in no way support themselves; and these were to receive from the association all that was needed. (*b*) Those who could earn half of their support; and these were to receive the required half from the visitors. (*c*) Those who could earn only a quarter of what was necessary; and these were to receive the complement of three quarters. (*d*) Finally came those who were well able to work, but refused to do so. This class of persons was to receive no aid, and public officials were asked to force them to work. After those who were in need had been provided for, all street begging was prohibited. Night refuges were established for itinerants, who were given supper and a lodging and on the following day sent away with a small donation. Those of the Association of Charity who had been trained under Vincent went to other towns and villages to organize branches; and in this way the work spread until it embraced a large part of France. Wherever the spirit of the workers relaxed, St. Vincent, like a true leader, gathered around him the most capable and earnest women and sent them to the different centers to reënkindle enthusiasm and zeal. In these official visitations the most helpful woman was Mlle. de Gras, Blessed Louise de Marillac, who became so closely connected with the saint's future work.

6. Another work of organization on the part of St. Vincent de Paul was the founding of the Ladies of Charity, in 1634, for visiting the sick. It was distinct from the Association of Charity just described, and was composed of ladies of rank. Its object was to recruit volunteers for visiting the sick in the large Hotel Dieu of Paris, although

later its activities were extended to other fields. Even in our own day a hospital that cares for ten thousand people in a year is ranked among the largest. It may be surprising then to learn that the Hotel Dieu in Paris cared for twenty-five thousand patients a year. Persons of every age, sex, rank and country passed through this institution. Madame de Goussault, who was accustomed to visit the hospital, noticed certain defects and even abuses, and pleaded with St. Vincent to assist her in correcting the evils. It was a delicate situation. Discreet man that he was, the saint weighed the matter well. Thoughtless action or undue haste would accomplish nothing. In the opinion of the pious lady the work would not succeed without the help of the saint, and she therefore visited the archbishop and secured from him a letter approving of her work and calling upon St. Vincent to direct it. Other ladies of rank joined in the good work, which now took on the form of an association. The saint gave them some regulations for their guidance. On arriving at the hospital they were to present themselves to the authorities (sisters) and humbly ask permission to assist them in the care of the sick. By following this method the ladies would give edification by their humility and would not be regarded as intruders. The results of their work were at once manifest, and besides improving the organization of the hospital, they converted hundreds of the sick and brought them to the practice of their religion.

7. But the work of the Ladies of Charity was not restricted to the Hotel Dieu. A section was soon formed to visit and comfort the inmates of the prisons. Those who have read the sad story of Little Dorrit, by Dickens, will remember the evils of the English prisons into which hundreds of innocent persons were thrust because, owing

to unforeseen circumstances, they were not able to pay their debts. In the French prisons, too, there were numerous debtors. Their cases were investigated, money was collected to meet their obligations, and many were set free. The lives of others were made more bearable by the abundant charity and love of these noble women, trained and directed by St. Vincent de Paul. From the jails the Ladies of Charity went to the galleys to administer to the convicts. A home for young girls was opened; then came a refuge for the outcast women of the city, and a hospice for the aged; and finally, attention was directed to the care of the foundlings.

8. Before the coming of St. Vincent de Paul into the field of social endeavor there were institutions for the care of abandoned children. His contribution to social service consisted in a better organization of the work previously done. At this period of his life he had around him many experienced helpers, and through them he made a very thorough investigation of the conditions under which foundlings were received and how they were treated. Here we witness the method of this splendid organizer. Had he attempted single-handed to carry out his projects, few of them could ever have been accomplished. He was the general, the leader; and others executed his plans, leaving the director free to supervise his many projects of charity. It was found that fully four hundred abandoned infants were received yearly in the crêche in Paris; that they were often neglected and subjected to untold sufferings; that they were often sold to strangers; and, worst of all, that many died without baptism. No time was to be lost. The Ladies of Charity took over the care of the most desperate cases, saw that all were baptised, and instituted a daily roll call to prevent the trafficking in children. But why take care of only a few

of the infants? Why not adopt all of them? The project seemed beyond the means of the volunteers; but urged by their director, the Ladies of Charity entered boldly upon the work. For months the burden of expense seemed too great, and on several occasions there was thought of abandoning the work. At this crisis we see the hand and heart of the master, and we have the words that fell from his own lips when the Ladies of Charity faltered in their undertaking:

"Yes, ladies, compassion and charity have led you to adopt these little creatures for your children; you became their mothers by grace when their mothers by nature abandoned them. See now whether you too will forsake them. Cease to be their mothers to become for the moment their judges; their life and death are in your hands. I await your decision. The time has come for you to pronounce sentence and to declare whether or not you will still have pity on them. If you continue your charitable care over them, they will live; if you abandon them, they will undoubtedly perish. Your own experience forbids you to doubt it."

"The assembly was moved to tears, and with one voice exclaimed that the work was to be continued. As a matter of fact it was continued. Sustained by St. Vincent, aided by new letters-patent from the king, the work for the foundlings traversed the eighteenth century, triumphantly entered the nineteenth, and even today sheds an aureola of glory round St. Vincent de Paul, religion and the Church, before which must bow in reverence and gratitude every man who has a heart."

9. The two organizations which we have briefly described, the Association of Charity and the Ladies of Charity, by a happy combination lead to the formation of that great sisterhood, that personification of the heroic

in the annals of many a social crisis during the past three centuries — the Sisters of Charity. When the Association of Charity, which Vincent de Paul had organized to visit the poor in their residences, was limited in its work to villages and towns, it met with marked success, but when it endeavored to function in the cities there arose a difficulty. Many of the upper classes who joined the society could not adapt themselves to the work; some neglected their self-imposed duties, and others sent their servants to visit the poor. The results fell short of the ideals of the saint. What would he do? Again he would call upon those whom he had trained and with their aid solve the problem. He would gather willing workers from the outlying provinces of France and prepare them for the work in the cities. And who would train them, and where? In Mlle. de Gras he found the devoted and able directress. In early life she had desired to join the austere sisterhood of the Capuchins, but her feeble health forced her to abandon her resolution. Urged by her family to marry, she had complied, and now, after a few years of conjugal life, was a widow with an only child. St. Vincent de Paul knew well the treasure which he possessed in this gifted woman, and trained her with the consummate skill of a master. She in turn transmitted his zeal and his love to those whom she had under her charge.

In a small house in one of the poor districts of Paris, on the twenty-fifth of March, 1634, Mlle. de Gras consecrated her life by the vows of religion to the service of the poor. Subjects responded generously to the call to join her in her undertaking, and soon Vincent had the satisfaction of seeing a community of devoted workers. He visited them weekly and gave them instructions. His talks have been preserved to posterity, and will ever

remain golden words of advice for all who, in the spirit of true Christianity, wish to minister to those in need.

10. "A community like yours," said the founder, "destined to so holy and noble an object, so agreeable to our divine Saviour and so useful to our neighbor, could certainly have no other author but God Himself. For, until its commencement, had any one ever heard of such a work? Why has God done this? He did it to serve the poor. We have seen, it is true, religious communities and hospitals for the assistance of the sick; but before your establishment there was never a community destined to go and serve the sick in their houses. If, in some poor family, any one fell sick, he was sent to the hospital, and this separated the husband from his wife, and the children from their parents."

He addressed them on another occasion in these words:

"You should act, my sisters, with great respect and obedience towards the doctors, taking great care never to condemn or contradict their orders. Endeavor, on the contrary, to fulfil them with great exactitude, and without ever presuming to prepare the medicines according to your own way of thinking. Punctually follow what they have prescribed, both with regard to the quantity of the dose and the ingredients of which it is composed, because upon this fidelity and exactness depends nothing less, perhaps, than the life of the patient. Respect the doctors, not only because they are more learned and enlightened than you, but because God commands you in the Holy Scripture to do so in the following words: 'Honor the physicians, for the need thou hast of them. The kings likewise, and all the great ones of the earth, honor them.' Why should you, my sisters, because you see and converse with them so frequently, fail to show

them the honor and respect due to them? You are ignorant of the reasons they have for pursuing different methods in the treatment of maladies which seem to you to be the same. You must endeavor particularly to remember and observe their method of treating the sick, so that when you will be in the villages, or any other place in which there is no doctor, you may render yourselves useful by applying their method."[1]

11. Bougaud, the biographer of St. Vincent de Paul, thus writes of the glorious work of the Sisters of Charity: "There are few who have not met the Sisters of Charity and at once recognized in them the daughters of our saint. They have founded more than 2000 houses, and neither the effeminacy of the reign of Louis XIV, the horrors of the first republic, nor the wretched irreligion of the third has been able to dim their splendor. From France they have passed to Italy, Poland, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and now to England and Scotland. They have traversed the Atlantic, and in the American Civil War their charity was rich alike for North and South. What Eastern land does not know them? At Constantinople, Smyrna, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Algiers they are met in the streets; they have penetrated into Persia, Abyssinia and China, and everywhere win respect and admiration, even from those who differ from them in religion. Nothing has escaped their beneficent influence, for everywhere they went they established crêches, hospitals, orphanages, schools and workshops. For every wound they found a balm, for every sorrow a consolation. Even a world that denies Jesus Christ and His Church has been forced to recognize the sweet odor of their charity."[2]

[1] Bougaud's *History of St. Vincent de Paul*, Vol. I, pp. 277, 283-4.
[2] *Id.*, Vol. II, pp. 130-131.

12. But we must not imagine that so keen-sighted an organizer as Vincent de Paul would overlook the value of associations of men. As early as 1618, through the influence of the de Gondi family and with the approbation of the Bishop of Soissons, he founded a society of men with rules similar to those of the "Association of Charity." One of the officials, known as the visitor, made regular inspections of his district and reported to the association the names of any of those who were in want. The society, while assisting the deserving poor, sought to drive sluggards and beggars from the streets; for such idlers were considered a menace and disgrace to the communities. So important did the saint consider the establishment of the men's associations that he passed from village to village and personally directed the work of organization. We have the record of one of these meetings held in the city of Macon in 1623:

"All classes were represented at this assembly — the lieutenant general, crown prosecutor, the aldermen, the judges, curés, deans, and many of the distinguished gentry and merchants. The mayor spoke first. He explained that the object of their meeting was, in obedience to the divine precept, to provide for the poor. This charitable work was to be on new lines, and should do away with beggars at the church doors and houses, where they got assistance too freely, which made even those that were able unwilling to work. For some time past it was thought to meet this difficulty by a hospital, but the poor disliked going there. Now there was among them a holy man, the Count de Joigny's chaplain, who, filled with zeal and piety, had struck on a new plan, by which comfort and nourishment had been given to the poor of Trevoux and other places. He thought, therefore, that this opportunity ought to be utilized in the interests of the community.

"All spoke in their turn to the same effect, after which, as a beginning of so laudable a charity, it was unanimously resolved that each branch of the society should name delegates, and thus form a commission to institute ways and means of putting into practice what they had resolved upon. This was done the next day.

"As usual, to establish some order among this confused mass of true and false poverty, the first class really in want of charity, the second only abusing it, he began: (1) by separating the sick from the healthy; (2) he confided the sick to some pious ladies who would visit and comfort them; (3) he gave work to the healthy; (4) he procured trades for the young; (5) he distributed alms to those unable to work."[1]

13. For the support of his numerous associations and institutions Vincent devised many means which savor of modern-day methods. Solicitations were made from house to house; boxes were placed in hotels; collections were made in churches; and fines imposed by judges were reserved for his use. There was a yearly tax on the clergy and the wealthy nobles. Many rich legacies were left for the work, such as the fortune of 6,000 livres by the Duchess d'Aiguillon. At one time the nobles raised 40,000 francs, and finally the king and queen contributed an annuity of 8,000 francs.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Social life was at its lowest ebb during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To what causes must this be attributed?

2. The work of St. Vincent de Paul has extended over more than two centuries. Is this a proof that it has been systematic and practical?

3. Did St. Vincent de Paul discover new principles of social work, or did he apply old principles to new programs?

[1] *Id.*, Vol. I, pp. 81-83.

4. Is it possible for all social work to be preventive?

5. Must investigation always precede relief?

6. Must some work be in the nature of relief?

7. Indicate the preventive nature of the work of St. Vincent de Paul.

8. If a social evil cannot be immediately corrected, is it wise to apply temporary relief?

9. Do you think that St. Vincent de Paul would have favored giving alms to beggars at Church doors?

10. Are you in favor of allowing beggars on the street and of giving money to the poor who beg on the streets?

11. Do you approve of buying pencils and chewing gum from maimed and disabled persons?

12. Every city has ample provision for meeting emergency cases, not only for the sick but for those who are in need of food and shelter. Are you acquainted with these public and private agencies in your community?

13. Do you think that St. Vincent de Paul, if he lived today, would make a careful study of social agencies?

14. If a person in distress asked you for money for a meal, what would you do?

15. If in the afternoon of a winter's day you were asked for money for shelter what would you do? If the request were made at seven o'clock at night, would the circumstances of time change your method of action?

16. What two features go to make the St. Vincent de Paul Society one of the most perfect of social agencies? (See the author's *Introduction to Social Service*, Chap. XIV, Sec. 5.)

17. Let someone of the class write a paper on Frederick Ozanam.

18. Why did Frederick Ozanam call his association the St. Vincent de Paul Society?

19. Write a paper on the life of Thomas M. Mulry (Life by Thomas M. Meehan), who for more than a quarter of a century directed the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society in the United States.

20. It would seem to be the proper place to pause and consider two methods of studying social history. The first is the selection of salient movements; followed in this book. The second is a study of the lives of eminent leaders in social thought. What would be the special advantages of each method?

CHAPTER XXIII

SOCIAL WORK OF SODALITIES

1. Our attitude towards the heroic. 2. The foundation and growth of the sodalities. 3. The Red Cross three hundred years ago. 4. Special work in Naples. 5. The sodality at Caen. 6. Lending money to deserving persons. 7. Visiting the poor of the city. 8. Teaching trades, and making the poor self-sustaining. 9. Visiting the sick. Spiritual results. 10. Work in the prisons. Summary of the work. 11. Business methods in charity. 12. Sodalities in Germany. 13. Safeguarding the stage. 14. Anticipating Ozanam. 15. The beginning of foreign missions. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. There is something in the heart of man that prompts him to revere the names of great personages. In our public parks we erect monuments to those who have excelled — the poet, the orator, the musician, the statesman, the soldier. In doing this we express our appreciation of the worth of men who have merited well of others. If we were forgetful of these names, we would be wanting in those finer sentiments and feelings which urge us to keep in mind and outwardly manifest reverence for those who have in a marked degree benefited their fellow men. If we spoke of them insultingly, those who heard us would either regard us with pity or would seek to avenge the insult.

When General Sherman died in New York, it was announced that his remains would be brought to St. Louis in a special train. As that train was speeding across the southern part of Illinois, the engineer looked out and saw in the dim light of morning a solitary soldier

standing near the track; and as the engine whirled by the soldier presented arms. The old soldier had read that the body of the general who had led him in battle would be brought on the special train; and donning his faded uniform of blue he waited in the solemn stillness of night to pay a last tribute of reverence and respect to his old commander.

Religion too has her heroes, saintly men and women who led the most unselfish lives for the love of God and in the service of their fellow men. Above all other creatures was the Daughter of Israel, the Virgin Mother of Christ. She, more than any other creature, deserves honor. Only ignorance would deny to her the veneration accorded to those who were great. Devotion to the Mother of God has ever flourished in the Catholic Church. It has not been a barren devotion, but in addition to the spiritual good it has done to individuals, it has prompted some of the greatest of social activities. In the present chapter we shall show how an organization which had for its primary object devotion to the Blessed Virgin became also a means of enlisting thousands of men and women in the cause of social service. This organization was the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin. It is still flourishing in every Catholic land. The last official records give about forty-five thousand units, with over six thousand centers in the United States.

2. The sodality was founded in Rome in 1563 by a Jesuit professor, John Leunis. He gathered a few of the better students in his class for special prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin, and at the same time he sought to make their lives fruitful in good works. From this small beginning sodalities spread over the entire Christian world; and we find these associations, not only in the centers of civilization, but among the Indians of Canada and South

America and in the far-off communities of China. Popes and cardinals, archbishops and bishops, kings and queens and the nobility of many lands were numbered among the sodalists. Sigismund III, King of Poland and Sweden; Ladislaus IV, King of Poland; Philip and Ferdinand, Princes of Bavaria; Henry of Bourbon of France; John IV of Portugal are a few of the royal titles which grace the records of the sodality. On the roll of the Sodality at Gratz, 1714, appear the names of thirty-two of the highest nobility; three emperors, eight archdukes, one empress and nine archduchesses of Austria. There were sodalities for every class of persons — clergymen, nobles, schoolmasters, artists, students, merchants, mechanics, sailors, bakers, gardeners, porters, and peasants.

We are at present interested in the social work of the sodalities; and we do not hesitate to claim that these associations anticipated by two centuries some of the very best efforts of modern times. Much of the work, too, was of a preventive kind, and achieved a success which must win our admiration. We are dealing here with a phase of social activity which, although it ramified into every corner of the civilized world, has received scant treatment in social history. The civic seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were periods of great chaos and suffering; but, in Catholic countries especially, the sodalities pursued scientific methods and left a glorious inheritance.

3. In our own day, wherever there is a catastrophe, the Red Cross rushes to the scene. Let us see how the sodalities did the Red Cross work in the past. In 1631, owing to an eruption of Vesuvius, thousands of fugitives invaded Naples and implored help. The different sodalities answered the call, secured lodging and food, and assisted more than sixteen thousand of the victims.

"Towards the last days of August, 1619, the Sicilian fleet, badly damaged in a naval battle, was forced to take refuge in the port of Syracuse. The ships were filled with sick and wounded, and there was no place in the town ready to receive them. In this extremity, Father Filippazzi proffered his own and his sodality's services in aid of the unfortunate men. Under his direction three vast hospitals constructed of timber were at once erected, where the sick were brought ashore and installed. Then the sodalists went about the town begging for mattresses, linen, bedclothes, food and remedies of all sorts. They nursed these poor soldiers tenderly, and performed for them all the duties of the most humble charity. Only a few died from their wounds, but these were surrounded by all the aids of religion; the others never ceased loudly proclaiming that they owed their recovery, in a great measure, to the charitable Jesuit and his sodalists."[1]

4. In the middle of the seventeenth century, under the direction of Father Vincent Caraffa, the sodality in Naples showed the most tender solicitude for the inmates in the hospital of incurables, dressed their wounds, and in every way ministered to them. On certain feast days they provided the inmates with a sumptuous banquet. The walls were covered with tapestries embroidered with gold; tablecloths and napkins of the finest quality were provided; there were the choicest dishes and desserts, and music added delight to the occasion. Prisoners also enjoyed the thoughtful charity of the sodalists, and collections were often taken up to secure the discharge of those who were in jail for failure to pay their debts. The visiting of prisons and hospitals was a cherished work among sodalists in every country.

[1] *The Sodality of Our Lady. Historical Sketches.* By Augustus Drive, S. J., p. 35.

A very remarkable tribute to the general work of the sodalists was made by Cardinal de Bausset in his "History of Fenelon." "In the principal commercial towns," he writes, "as is still fresh in the minds of many, there never was more order and peace, more honesty in business, less bankruptcy and less depravity, than when the sodalities existed. The Jesuits knew how to link the sodalities with all professions and with all social institutions; they helped to maintain among all classes and conditions that regularity of manners, that spirit of subordination, that prudent economy, which keeps peace and harmony in families and makes the prosperity of empires."[1]

5. Fortunately there has been preserved a detailed account of the activities of the sodalities of Caen, in northwestern France, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The following report written by the director is taken from "Historical Sketches of the Sodality," by Augustus Drive, S. J., pp. 64–71. The document calls for little explanation or comment. The work accomplished by the sodalists at Caen will challenge the best that is done in our day. In the chaotic condition of the times the organized charity of the sodalities stands out as a beacon light.

6. First of all, these gentlemen make up a purse among themselves to lend without interest to laborers, tradesmen and others, and in this way to help them to maintain themselves in their profession, or enable them to take it up again in case they have been obliged to abandon it through want of means. In order not to be deceived good securities are required from them and careful investigations are made that they really are in want and that there is room for hope they will, by their industry and work, profit by the assistance given them, and will be

[1] *Id.*, p. 62.

able by degrees to pay back what has been lent them. Care is taken, as much as possible, not to give money, because it sometimes happens that they spend it uselessly, but to spend it with them on articles which are necessary for their work, such as tools, wool, wood, leather, thread, horses, cattle, etc.

Those who desire help send the secretary a written request addressed to the prefect of the sodality. The director appoints a committee of three to investigate; their names are written underneath the request; the committee ordinarily consists of an ecclesiastic, a married and a single man. These take turns in reporting any information, and always with great exactitude and with secrecy, so as never to embarrass those whom they are trying to help. At the bottom of the report they write their opinion and signature, and then the director, after having looked over and carefully examined it, tells the secretary what to do. If the request is to be granted, the secretary makes the applicant give some security, with the promise that the sum lent him will be paid back. This, Reverend Father, is the first practice in the gentlemen's sodality.

7. The second consists in visiting every week, from All Saints' to the first days of May, all the poor of the six parishes of the suburbs, where there are not enough rich people to care for them. The pastor sends the director a list of the poor, with their addresses. The director divides this list into several larger or smaller ones according to the number of poor in the parish. At the beginning of each month the lists are given to those in the sodality who are to make the visits. These go in groups of three and three, an ecclesiastic, a married and a single man, and appoint a day for the first visit to their poor. The following Sunday, after Vespers, they give their

report before the whole assembly of the condition of those whom they have visited. Then the question of what each one is to receive is settled. If the three sodalists in charge of the list can make up the necessary amount among them, they do it with pleasure; if not, it is not an exception but rather the custom to take what is required from the sodality purse. You ask what is given to the poor on these visits? I answer, bread, clothes, and extra beds, so that the members of a family may be better taken care of, and grave disorders be prevented. But the greatest advantage concerns the spiritual — to console the poor and exhort them to resignation and the frequentation of the sacraments; the instruction of children in the presence of their parents; sometimes secret disorders or scandals are discovered, which may be remedied with the help of the pastor; enemies are reconciled, etc.

8. The third practice consists in teaching poor but industrious boys the different trades, according to their inclinations and talents, which latter may have been discovered during visits to their families. This may be done in three different ways — either by a competition, selecting those who are the best in Christian doctrine (not excluding, however, any who show an aptitude to apply themselves to study); when there is a tie, the names are drawn by lot; lastly, in a family where there are a large number of children, those who seem most likely to succeed are taken. When the choice has been made in one of these three ways, the director names three gentlemen of the sodality to make arrangements with a teacher and to follow up the matter to the end of the apprenticeship. After this, charity demands that these same three gentlemen lend their protection to their pupil, and help him to get established.

Fourthly, we have found in general that the best way of helping the poor who conduct themselves well is to make them work, by giving them the necessary start, which when left to themselves it is impossible for them to get. One is well repaid for such pains; they are taken out of idleness, spared the shame of begging, and their work sometimes brings considerable profit, which benefits the poor and helps to continue and perpetuate such good works when Our Lord sees fit to bless them.

9. The fifth practice concerns the sick poor of the six parishes of the suburbs. During their illness they are supplied with sheets, nightclothes and necessary linen, also such food and nourishment as may promote their recovery. This also is done according to system. In each parish a little store of linen is kept under the charge of some devoted person who will look after it, send it to the sick poor and see that it is returned after the illness. In order to keep up these special supplies a general one is kept in the city and left in the hands of some trustworthy person who offers himself voluntarily for the work. Seven gentlemen are appointed to visit the seven stores from time to time and to send in their report to the sodality. When the linen used by the sick people is worn out, it is given to poor mothers, who can use it for their young children, or else it is employed for dressing the wounds of the poor, to which work certain gentlemen of distinguished birth and virtue have been devoting themselves for the past few years.

The sixth practice of the sodality produces solid spiritual effects which are lasting, and often remain in the soul until death. This is a spiritual retreat which is given every year, at Christmas, to twenty-five young girls or women named by those members of the sodality who during their visits have discovered those most in need of

such help. Four or five are chosen from each of the six parishes, and in order that this advantage may be given to many souls, no one is taken more than once in nine years. The choice is not indiscriminate; two classes of people are preferred — the aged, in order that they may prepare themselves for death by a good general confession, and those younger souls whose character and past conduct render such an aid more necessary.

10. Seventhly, the poor in the prisons are also included in the charity of the sodality. For them a particular supply of linen is kept, to distribute to the healthy as well as to the sick. Clean changes are provided for those who are well, every one or two weeks according to the season, and the washing is done without any expense to them. For the sick, other necessary linen is provided as for the sick in the suburbs, and, as is done for these latter, necessary remedies, medicines and soups are procured. Several persons outside the sodality help the members to send soup daily to the poor in the prisons. Nor do the prisoners fail to find charitable legal advisers among our sodalists. Several years ago the sodality made them a present of "The Lives of the Saints," with the seal of the sodality, in order to encourage them to preserve the book more carefully. Each day, after their common prayer, they read the life of a saint for the day. Such reading has been a source of great spiritual profit to them. The zeal of the sodality even extends to foreign missions as to those at home, each one contributing to these according to his means.

Thus, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, under the direction and evidently by the initiative of the Jesuit Fathers at Caen, in one of their sodalities the following works are found: (1) A pawnshop of the best kind. (2) Apprentice work. (3) Assistance in work, a

weighty question of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. (4) A dispensary: free medicines, remedies, and medical consultations. (5) Work in prisons. (6) Regular visits to the poor, helping them with alms, money, and linen, in such a manner as to surpass perhaps even the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In fact we know nothing in our day of such linen stores kept in each poor parish.

One thing more, which it is well to repeat, is that one sodality had resources and zeal sufficient to maintain alone, and in a thriving condition, these six great works of charity, which in our day would need six entire institutions.

Besides this letter, in the same collection are also found a number of notices relating to the gentlemen's sodality: deliberations, receipts, bills, requests for help, investigations and other notes to help the secretary or treasurer in his accounts. They enable us to judge from facts of the progress of this beautiful Christian and social enterprise.

11. Not only were the funds kept in a safe place, but the sodality, according to the decision of the general assembly, used great care in placing the loans and demanded satisfactory securities. It was understood that loans were to be made only to men of good standing, who were neither drunkards nor dissipated. The letter has already enlightened us on this subject. Every request for pecuniary help was made in writing; an inquiry followed; the result of which, duly authenticated, was signed by the sodalists in charge of it. Here is one example among many others:

Denis Barton begs the gentlemen of the sodality for the sum of fifty livres to enable him to obtain the position of master shoemaker. He is a young man of good character and habits. He lives in Rue St. Jean, near

St. Pierre Bridge. As security for the amount requested he gives as reference the name of Mr. Leroux, master shoemaker, who lives in Goeullt St., parish of Notre Dame.

Further down we read in another hand:

Having investigated the habits and conduct of the above Barton, and visited his house, we believe that the sum of fifty livres may be safely lent to him, in order to enable him to obtain the position of master shoemaker, which sum he will pay back in one year, in twelve monthly payments.

Given at Caen, July 5, 1701.

Detterville, Dargence, Dubosc-Lecocq.

The workman who had been worthy of such help was also obliged to give security or sign a deed. For example:

I, the undersigned, Nicolas Ancelle, inkstand maker, living in the present parish of Saint-Martin de Caen, acknowledge the debt to Mr. Guérard, councillor and lawyer to the King, in the vicounty of Caen, of sixty livres which he lent me today, for payment of which sum I agree that he receive in my stead and place from Mr. Gabriel Collet, a baker of Caen, my tenant, living in Froide St., the said sum of sixty livres in three payments . . . which the said Collet has consented to pay to the said Guérard from the rent which he will be owing to the said Ancelle.[1]

12. The significance of the work of sodalities in Germany can be gauged from the number of sodalists on the rolls and the number of places in which they worked. In 1575 the first sodality came into being at the Jesuit college in Cologne. Soon it numbered over 600 members, including not only students of the secondary schools, but

[1] Nos. 6 to 11 are from Drive.

doctors, lawyers, and others of the professional ranks. With the rapidly expanding development of Jesuit education in Germany, Austria, and Poland the growth of the sodality kept pace. A little less than two hundred years after the founding of the sodality in Cologne there were more than two hundred sodalities. The work expanded from a mere scholastic, intramural society into a series of confederated societies. There were sodalities for artisans, for the clergy, for secondary and university school students, for women, and for the nobility.

A few concrete examples gleaned from the diaries of certain German sodalities will give a fair estimate of the general run of works accomplished by sodalists. In the year 1604 a young sodalist in Augsburg obtained from his father the means of support for an old man who was abandoned by all. He paid for a physician, for medicines, and for the old man's support during convalescence. In the year 1606 the sodalists at Dillingen, with Prince Radziwill at their head, visited the hospital during the Carnival time, served the sick and gave them gifts. In the same year the sodalists of Altoetting, some of whom were poor themselves, helped the poor pilgrims with food, lodging and provisions for the journey. In the year 1603 the sodalists at Munich watched with the sick through entire nights, begged from door to door for the poor who were ashamed, and served for months in the hospital. In the year 1602 the same sodalists had given special attention to poor wayfarers who had to spend the nights in the open squares, and secured them lodgings. Even small boys spent their pocket money on the poor. In the great famine of 1622 the sodalists at Innsbruck bought grain and had 1500 loaves baked for the poor. At the same time the sodalists at Munich were distributing 250 pieces of gold amongst the poor.

The following works of charity flourished at Ingolstadt: The giving of alms, and sending of food directly from the table to the poor and the sick. Some sodalists picked up poor wanderers on the streets and secured them a night's lodging; others devoted their services to the sick and performed the most menial tasks for them. Others assisted the dying, saw to it that they had a priest in their last moments and received the sacraments; another group spent their efforts in composing quarrels of long standing. Other sodalists taught the Faith to children and the uneducated. Sodalists were in the habit of mingling with the gatherings of farmers during the holidays, of breaking up unclean conversations and supplying a fund of interesting and decent stories themselves. One sodalist bought up all the pornographic books which were for sale in secret places and burnt them. He also prevailed upon those who had bought such books to burn them. The sodality at Ingolstadt was especially active in distributing good books. It even had entire editions published and distributed at its own expense. Thus it got out editions of devotional works in 1622, 1627, 1640, and 1644.

13. These scattered indications will give some idea of the caliber of sodality work principally along the lines of social service. To another, although a more indirect spiritual or rather cultural influence, we shall devote a few lines. We refer to the great service rendered by the dramatic productions of the sodalities in raising the tone of the stage and keeping this powerful social agency pure at its source. One of the greatest curses of modern life is the deadly fact that we let ourselves be amused by people who as a class are often incapable of high ethical ideals. In making popular amusement really of the people and by the people the sodalities shone as brightly

as did their medieval predecessors, the guilds, and performed a work of a decided preventive nature.

The dramas of the sodality were calculated to please as well as edify. As an example of a play acted by a students' sodality, we have *Falco*, a glorification of the love of truth, staged by the students of upper classes on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of July, 1644, in the auditorium of the Jesuit college at Cologne. In the year 1642 a drama, *Anatolius*, was enacted at Cologne; for the music the sodality paid two imperial dollars. In 1649 the sodality in the same city played *Joseph Sold into Egypt*. In Muenster the students of the Jesuit college put on the *Tragical play, Emanuel or the Lost Sheep*. This piece was staged very sumptuously and won a hearty welcome.

Plays like the above-mentioned were put on by Jesuit college students for sodalities of artisans, or, at any rate, of people who were not attending school. Here are some instances of the sodalities composed of non-students giving plays. In Coblenz in 1624 the citizens' Sodality of the Assumption put on a play called *Tobias*, at which the imperial elector of Treves was present. In Fulda the citizens' sodality exhibited a play which flayed the vice of drunkenness (1630). The leading figure was a drunkard who sells his soul to the devil during a drinking bout. In Ingolstadt the citizens' Sodality of Our Lady of Victory played on the sixth of January, 1630, a drama on the birth of the Redeemer, together with its effects on Caesar Augustus and king Herod. One year later the same sodality put on a magnificent spectacle comprising the childhood, conversion, and life of the Prince of the Apostles. The Emmerich citizens' sodality presented in the auditorium of the Jesuit college a German tragedy, *Assuerus*, composed by Nicholas Kirchner, in which Esther

is glorified as a furtherer of the Faith. In August of 1640 a German play was staged on the occasion of the renewal of the oath of loyalty by the small-boys' sodality. At the same time the girls put on a play for the women's sodality. "After dinner the girls exhibited a drama in a theater downstairs, distinct from the theater of the college boys, about which a dispute arose." It may seem strange to modern readers to hear of two distinct theaters in a Jesuit college; but this was not uncommon in the sixteenth and seventeenth century colleges of the Jesuits, which were built by wealthy princes. At Vienna, for instance, the Jesuits had a large theater seating 3,000 persons, with another theater below it for private class theatricals. Not only did the substance of the plays given by the sodality wield a powerful influence for social betterment, but the medium, too, which was German, left a deep impress on the times. Some historians have gone so far as to say that had it not been for the Jesuit plays, both in Latin and German, the cultural downfall of Germany in music, art, and the drama would have been irreparable.[1]

14. More than two hundred years before Frederic Ozanam began his work among the poor of Paris, the sodalists of that city carried on an organized means of relief, which well might have served as a model for the social activities of the founder of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Not only did tramps and vagabonds flock to Paris, as they do to our modern cities at present, but bands of children, many of them quite young and unprotected, came from the remotest parts of the country to seek in the great city a means of livelihood.

[1] Bernhard Duhr, S. J., *Geschichte der Jesuiten in den Laendern Deutscher Zunge.* 4 vols. comprising 1555-1700. Index "Marianische Congregationen."

It was a sodalist, by the name of Etienne Joly, who first seemed to realize the dangers and needs of these groups of neglected children. Like Ozanam, Joly came into Paris from one of the smaller cities of France; like Ozanam, he first gained the good will of the little vagabonds by giving them food for their hungry stomachs; like Ozanam, he sat patiently with his little charges and taught them the elements of their religion; like Ozanam, he saw the spiritual needs of these deserted children long before the clergy realized the pressing call for their instruction; and, best of all, Joly, like Ozanam, did not let his organization perish when he could no longer direct it. The work went on under able managers, until, two hundred years later, its last director, the Venerable Baptiste de Salignac Fenelon, gained a martyr's crown during the French Revolution.

It is probable that Frederic Ozanam did not hear of the wonderful work of charity of Etienne Joly; but the striking similarity of their labors must be apparent to any one who has studied their lives. Each felt that charity to be effective must be organized. What was needed then is still more demanded now. There are many cities in the United States which are larger than Paris was during the lifetime of Joly and even of Ozanam. Life in these cities is far more complex, and difficulties of social work are greater. We believe that some of our Catholic people have been slow to realize this need of concerted action in all ministration for relieving the poor, and in safeguarding the innocent who are exposed to dangers of body and soul. The history of sodalities points out the power and necessity of organization.

15. One of the most conspicuous and far-reaching social works of the sodality was the part it took in the foreign missions and the Seminary of Foreign Missions.

A Jesuit priest, Alexander de Rohoes, returning to Europe after thirty years of work in India and China, at the request of Pope Innocent X preached a crusade of the missions, stirred the hearts of the people, and created interest and enthusiasm among all classes. But it remained for another Jesuit, John Bagot, to perfect the work and direct it for many years. Resigning his place at court, where he had been confessor of King Louis XIII, Father Bagot began the direction of those who under his guidance had volunteered for labor in foreign lands. The first members of the Society of Foreign Missions, founded and formally recognized in 1663, were former Jesuit students and members of the sodality established for the scholars in the College of Clermont. De Meurs, the first superior of the Foreign Missions in Paris; Francis de Montmorency, the first Bishop of Quebec; and Father Jogues, the martyred Jesuit missionary, were members of this sodality.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Recall the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy.
2. In what sense are the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy preventive measures?
3. The primary object of Christianity is supernatural; and yet the Church has ever been identified with social work. In the same way the Sodality is primarily a religious association, and yet social work has ever been connected with it. Discuss these facts.
4. Can we look forward to a time when all social work will be preventive?
5. After making a careful study of Nos. 8 and 11, discuss the preventive nature of the social work of sodalities.
6. Do you think that many social workers at the present time imagine that there was no really scientific social work in the past?
7. Make a study of the history of the Red Cross and the life of Clara Barton. What countries of Europe fully accepted and de-

veloped the principles of the association long before the United States entered it?

8. Make a study of the Red Cross in your community.

9. What improvement would you suggest in the social associations in your community?

10. What plans would you suggest to bring about greater harmony among the religious and civic social workers of your community?

11. In some cities the Catholics and Jews have not entered the community drives. Students may not have the experience and information to discuss this question fully; yet a limited expression of views will be most useful and interesting. Students can prepare themselves for social work by a frank debate on such subjects. It would be well for them to be reminded, however, that their immature minds and their want of experience prevent them from adding anything of real merit to the discussion.

12. Write your opinion of the discussion of question 11, and after a few years read what you have written. Probably by that time you will wish to destroy the paper.

13. Do you think that social activity will entirely do away with all poverty?

14. Can we look forward to a time when there will be no crime and no penal institutions?

15. In what respect have motives and ideals of social work changed in recent years?

16. Did social activity in the past tend to perpetuate poverty?

17. Have the number of poor people increased in our time?

18. Have the number of wealthy persons increased in our time?

19. Do those who have the highest motives in social work always seek for the most scientific methods?

20. Can we learn anything from the social work of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

21. In what way do our social problems differ from the social problems of those two centuries?

22. Has there been an increase in the length of life during the past century?

23. Was there more real suffering among the poor two hundred years ago than there is at present?

24. The sodality activities divided the cities into parishes, or, rather, they followed the divisions which were already made for parishes. Was this a workable plan?

25. The St. Vincent de Paul Society follows the parish division. Is this a good plan for present-day social service?

26. Do community centers and other forms of community work carry out in any way the methods of the sodalities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

CHAPTER XXIV

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EVILS FOLLOWING THE INVENTION OF MACHINERY

1. The age of invention. 2. Increase in industry and wealth. 3. Materialism and liberalism. 4. Character of the operators. 5. Strikes and riots. 6. *The Song of the Shirt.* 7. Terrible abuses of child labor. 8. Employment of children in mines. 9. Investigation of conditions at Manchester. *The Cry of the Children.* 10. The Parish System. 11. The Cottage System. 12. The Truck System. 13. Difficulty of inventors. 14. Increase in industry and wealth. 15. The origin of social problems in the United States. 16. The need of a true philosophy of life. Questions and topics for discussion.

1. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the economic and social life of Europe was tending towards a decline; and at the end of the eighteenth century chaos all but reigned. England was suffering from these conditions when her great inventors came into the field of industry. James Hargreaves, a carpenter of Lancashire (1770) invented the spinning jenny, a machine by which eight or more spindles were operated at the same time. These spindles were afterwards increased to sixteen, and later to one hundred and twenty. That was the beginning of the modern machinery for spinning. A year had not passed before Arkwright improved upon the methods of Hargreaves by producing the water frame, a machine which derived its name from the fact that it was operated by water power. After a few years Samuel Crompton combined the two previous inventions into his device known as "the mule"— a machine that both drew out the raw material and twisted it into the completed yarn.

2. With the inventions of these three men of genius came the beginning of great wealth to the English nation. Hundreds of factories sprang up over the country. As early as 1801 the mills of Lancashire imported ninety-eight thousand bales of cotton from India and the United States. In 1805 the mills of Blackburn manufactured forty million yards of calico, and in 1884 the output reached four billion four hundred and seventeen million. With this advent of machinery all handwork disappeared, and not even the small firms could continue in business. It was a wonderful opportunity for any nation, and wealth which would have seemed beyond the dreams of kings of the past came into the hands of the inventors and operators of England.

3. To understand intelligently the moral and social evils which arose in this age of invention one must recall that there were no laws to regulate the economic conditions which had suddenly appeared in England. Parliament was powerless to check abuses even when they were a disgrace to the English people. Unfortunately at this time the state religion had lost most of its power over the lives of men; while materialism and liberalism had become the accepted philosophy of the employers and the ruling classes. According to this view of society a mill owner was justified in paying the very lowest wage to a man, woman, or child and in exacting the very hardest and longest hours of work. If the wage was not sufficient to enable the employee to live in decency, or even to obtain the very necessaries of life, it mattered not to the employer. He was in business to make money; he had no responsibilities to the workman or to the public. Such was the false social and economic philosophy which was accepted at the time.

"The economic theory that started with Petty and his contemporaries, and followed a course of its own through Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Malthus, growing into a more elaborate philosophy, assigned to the working population the task of serving the masters of the great industry with a blind and irresponsible obedience. 'The poor man,' said a working-class paper, 'is esteemed only as an instrument of wealth.' The Commons of England, as Cobbett said, had become the laboring poor. Religion, in one form or another, might have checked this spirit by rescuing society from a materialist interpretation, insisting on the conception of man as an end in himself, and refusing to surrender that revelation to any science of politics or any law of trade. Such a force was implicit in the medieval religion that had disappeared, good and bad elements alike, at the Reformation." [1]

4. This false and utilitarian philosophy was such as to appeal to the men who became the mill owners and operators. One of the most reliable books on this subject was by P. Gaskell, Esq., entitled, *The Manufacturing Population of England: Its Moral, Social and Physical Conditions, and the Changes which have arisen from the Use of Steam Machinery with an Examination of Infant Labor.* The book was written (1833) at a time when many of the abuses were still fresh in the minds of men; in fact before many of the evils had been entirely corrected.

"The moral, social, and domestic relations of the immense portion of the productive population of the kingdom, now engaged in manufactures, present a picture as

[1] *The Town Laborer,* by J. L. and B. Hammond, p. 328. This book (1917) gives proof of careful research, and confirms the worst that has been written about the condition of the laboring classes of this period.

strange and as deeply interesting as any in the whole circle of the history of mankind. Many of the first successful manufacturers were men who had their origin in the rank of mere operatives, or who sprung from the extinct class of yeomen.

"The celerity with which some of these individuals accumulated wealth in the early times of steam spinning and weaving, are proofs — if any such were wanting — that they were men of quick views, great energy and character, and were by these means able to avail themselves to the utmost of golden advantages, which were presented to their grasp from 1790 to 1817, a time when they supplied the whole universe with the products of manufacturing.

"But they were men of very limited general information, men who saw and knew little of anything beyond the demand for their twist or cloth, and with the speediest and best modes for their production. They were, however, from their acquired station, men who exercised very considerable influence upon the hordes of workmen who became dependent upon them.

"Master cotton spinners and weavers then, at the commencement of this important epoch, were in many instances men sprung from the ranks of the laborers, or from a grade just removed above these; uneducated, of coarse habits, sensual in their enjoyment, partaking of the rude revelry of their dependents, overwhelmed by success, but yet, paradoxical as it may sound, industrious men and active and far-sighted tradesmen.

"Many of these might be found, after a night spent in debauchery and licentiousness, sobered down by an hour or two of rest and by the ringing of the factory bell, going through the business of the day with untiring activity and unerring rectitude; surrounded too, as they

were, by their companions, alike busily engaged under their inspection, again to plunge, at the expiration of the hour of labor, into the same vortex of inebriation and riot." [1]

5. It must be remembered that labor unions were unknown at the time, and that it was treason for the workingmen to meet and discuss their grievances. However, the men did succeed in uniting against their heartless masters; and the worst evils of strikes and riots were witnessed in the manufacturing districts of the country.

"The moral influence of combinations upon the character of the manufacturing population has been exceedingly pernicious. It has placed a barrier between the master and the hands which can never be removed but with the utmost difficulty; for neither dare trust the other. Suspicion has usurped the place of confidence; an utter alienation of all friendly feelings — mutual fear — hatred, and a system of espionage totally subversive of everything honorable in their intercourse.

"The demonstrations of vengeance carried into effect in some instances have at times forced the masters to arm themselves, to garrison their houses and mills, and have placed a whole district in a state of siege, with all the disorganization of social ties incident to civil warfare. No man was safe, no family secure from midnight disturbance; shots were fired into the rooms where it was believed the master had his resting place. By day he had to use every precaution to avoid falling into the hands of an infuriated mob — his family reviled — loaded with the most opprobrious epithets — hooted and hissed wherever opportunity offered; no wonder that feelings of bitterness were aroused against those who thus wantonly violated all the forms of decency and justice. Another

[1] Gaskell, p. 52, etc.

moral evil of equal magnitude to the laborer resulting from combinations is that it renders himself and family improvident, and this is the very bane of all his comfort." [1]

6. The wail which went up from England during this period of intense poverty and suffering inspired the poet Hood to write *The Song of the Shirt;* and although he lived at a time when most of the social evils had been corrected, many still remained, and the remembrance of the others were burning in the hearts of the people.

The Song of the Shirt

With fingers weary and worn,
  With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
  Plying her needle and thread —
    Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
  And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"O men, with sisters dear!
  O men, with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
  But human creatures' lives!
    Stitch — stitch — stitch,
  In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
  A shroud as well as a shirt.

"Work — work — work!
  My labor never flags!
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
  A crust of bread — and rags.
That shattered roof — and this naked floor —
  A table — a broken chair —
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
  For sometimes falling there!

[1] *Id.*, pp. 309-312.

"O but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet —
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel
Before I knew the woes of want
And the work that costs a meal!

"O but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for love or hope,
But only time for grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

7. The culmination of this period of shame and crime came in the terrible exploitation of child labor. Again we must turn to Gaskell for an account of this evil. The passage which we quote has been embodied in many social and economic histories and has been accepted as a true picture of one of the most doleful woes of humanity, when the cries of the oppressed rose to heaven for vengeance:

"When factories were first built there was a strong repugnance on the part of parents who had been accustomed to the old family under the domestic system to send their children into these places. It was in fact considered a disgrace to do so. The epithet of 'factory girl' was the most insulting that could be applied to a young woman, and the girls that had once been in a factory could rarely find work elsewhere. Perhaps this was due to the shocking immorality, especially of the masters in the early factories. It was not until the wages of the workmen had been reduced to a starvation

level that they consented to their children and wives being employed in the mills.

"But the manufacturers wanted labor by some means or other, and they got it from workhouses. They sent for parish apprentices from all parts of England, and pretended to apprentice them to the new employments just introduced. The mill owners systematically communicated with the overseers of the poor, who arranged a day for the inspection of the pauper children. Those chosen by the manufacturer were then conveyed by wagons or canal boats to their destination, and from that moment were doomed to slavery. Sometimes regular traffickers would take the place of the manufacturer, and transfer a number of children to a factory district, and there keep them, generally in some dark cellar, till they could hand them over to a mill owner in want of hands, and who would come and examine their height, strength, and bodily capacities, exactly as did the slave dealers in the American markets.

"After that the children were simply at the mercy of their owners, nominally as apprentices, but in reality as mere slaves who got no wages, and whom it was not worth while even to feed and clothe properly because they were so cheap and their places could be so easily supplied. It was often arranged by the parish authorities, in order to get rid of imbeciles, that one idiot should be taken by the mill owner with every twenty sane children. The fate of these unhappy idiots was even worse than that of the others. The secret of their final end has never been disclosed, but we can form some idea of their awful sufferings from the hardships of the others, victims to capitalist greed and cruelty. Their treatment was most inhuman.

"The hours of their labor were limited only by exhaus-

tion, after many modes of torture had been unavailingly applied to force continued work. Illness was no excuse; no child was accounted ill till it was positively impossible to force him or her to continue to labor, in spite of all the cruelty which the ingenuity of the tormenter could suggest. Children often worked sixteen hours a day by day and night. Even Sunday was used as a convenient time to clean machinery. The author of *The History of the Factory Movement* writes: 'In stench, in heated rooms, amid the constant whirling of a thousand wheels, little fingers and little feet were kept in ceaseless action, forced into unnatural activity by blows from heavy hands and pain by instruments of punishment invented by the sharpened ingenuity of insatiable selfishness. They were fed upon the coarsest and cheapest food, often from the same as that fed out to the pigs by the master. They slept by turns and in relays in filthy beds which were never cool; for one set of children were sent to sleep in them as soon as the others had gone off to their daily or nightly toil.'

"There was often no discrimination of sexes; and disease, misery, and vice grew as in a hotbed of contagion. Some of these miserable beings tried to run away. To prevent their doing so those suspected of this tendency had irons riveted to their ankles, with long links reaching up to their hips, and were compelled to work and sleep in these chains, young women and girls, as well as boys, suffering this brutal treatment. Many died and were buried secretly at night in some desolate spot, lest people should notice the number of graves; and many committed suicide." [1]

8. Treatment of children in the coal mines was equally cruel and unjust. "At that time boys were employed

[1] *Industrial History of England,* by H. B. D. Gibbins, pp. 288-289.

everywhere, girls in certain districts, Lancashire, Cheshire, the West Riding and South Wales, besides Scotland. In some of the districts where girls were employed they were apparently employed as often as boys. Children were employed as trappers, that is, to open and shut the doors that guided the draught of air through the mine; as fillers, that is, to fill the skips and carriages when the men have hewn the coal; and as pushers or hurriers, that is, to push the trucks along from the workers to the foot of the shaft. But in some mines these trucks were drawn instead of pushed. A girdle is put around the naked waist, to which a chain from the carriage is hooked and passed between the legs, and the boys crawl on their hands and knees pulling the carriage after them. In the early years of the century this arrangement was very common, and women and girls were so employed. By 1842 it was more usual to have small iron railways, and the carriages were pushed along them.

"The trapping was done everywhere by children, generally from five to eight years of age. A girl of eight years old described her day: 'I'm a trapper in the Gamber Pit. I have to trap without a light, and I'm scared. I go at four and sometimes half-past three in the morning, and come out at five and half-past. I never go to sleep. Sometimes I sing when I have light, but not in the dark. I dare not sing then.' One of the subcommissioners remarked: 'I can never forget the first unfortunate creature of this class that I met with. It was a boy of about eight years old, who looked at me, as I passed through, with an expression of countenance the most abject and idiotic — like a thing, a creeping thing, peculiar to the place.' The trappers generally sat in a little hole, made at the side of the door, holding a string in their hand for twelve hours. As a rule they were in the dark, but sometimes a good-

natured collier would give them a bit of candle. In the West Riding the work of hurrying or pushing the corves was often done by girls. 'Chained, belted, harnessed like dogs in a go-cart, black, saturated with wet, and more than half naked, crawling upon their hands and feet, and dragging their heavy loads behind them, they present an appearance indescribable, disgusting, and unnatural.' " [1]

9. On the establishment of the Manchester Board of Health (1796) the following statement was made:

"It appears that the children and others who work in the large cotton factories are peculiarly disposed to be affected by the contagion of fever and that, when such infection is received, it is rapidly propagated, not only amongst those who are crowded together in the same apartments, but in the families and neighborhoods to which they belong.

"The large factories are generally injurious to those employed in them, even when no particular disease prevails, from the close confinement which is enjoined and from the debilitating effects of hot and impure air, and from the want of the active exercises which nature points out as essential in childhood and youth, to invigorate the system, and to fit out the species for the employments and the duties of manhood.

"The untimely labor of the night and the protracted labor of the day, with respect to children, not only tends to diminish future expectations as to the general sum of life and industry, by impairing the strength and destroying the vital stamina of the rising generation, but it too often gives encouragement to idleness, extravagance, and profligacy in the parents, who, contrary to the law of nature, subsist by the oppression of their children.

"It appears that the children employed in factories are

[1] *The Town Laborer*, p. 172

generally debarred from all opportunities of education and from moral and religious instruction." [1]

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, in *The Cry of the Children,* has echoed the protests of the little voices:

Go out, children, from the mine and from the city;
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do;
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips pretty;
Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them through.
But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the meadows
Like our weeds anear the mine?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-shadows,
From your pleasures fair and fine.

"For oh!" say the children, "we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we cared for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping;
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow;
For all day we drag our burden tiring,
Through the coal-dark, under-ground;
Or all day we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round."

And well may the children weep before you!
They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun.
They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;
They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom;
Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm;
Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap;
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly —
Let them weep! let them weep!

[1] Gaskell, p. 177.

10. To add to this terrible condition of things the parents of the children could not get employment, owing to the fact that child labor was so much cheaper. When the small pittance which the child brought home from the mill had been spent for the support of the family, application was made to the parish fund. This was the beginning of an evil known as the Parish System. It was intended to alleviate the condition of the poor and to support families where the wage was insufficient or where crops had failed; but the cruel and heartless mill owners took advantage of its existence to still further reduce the wage of the children, and forced both child and parents to rely more and more upon the parish funds.

11. Another evil arose at this time and was transferred to other countries where manufacturing centers existed. It was the Cottage System, so called because the mill owners built and owned groups of cottages for their employees, and exacted of them high rent, while at the same time they refused to give the people even the decencies and comforts demanded in family life. One of these English towns with the factory in the center and the squalid homes clustered around has been described by Dickens in "Hard Times." The utter contempt in which the working people were held is put in the mouth of Louise, the daughter of Mr. Gradgrind. She regarded the people in her father's factory as scarcely human, only "something to be worked so much and paid so much and then ended; something to be infallibly settled by the laws of supply and demand; something that blundered against these laws and floundered into difficulty; something that was a little pinched when wheat was dear and overrated itself when wheat was cheap; something that increased at such a rate of percentage and yielded another percent of crime and such another percent of pauperism;

something wholesale of which vast fortunes were made; something that occasionally rose like a vast sea and did harm and waste, chiefly to itself, and then fell again: this she knew the Coketown hands to be."

12. A third social and economic evil was that of the Truck System, under which the mill operators refused to pay money to the workmen or working children; but issued only tickets or certificates which could procure groceries and other commodities at the factory stores. Enormous profits were made on these sales, so that the company exploited the laborers, not only by paying a low wage, but by making a second profit in raising the price on the very necessities of life. The evils of the Truck System were not confined to England. Like those of the Cottage System, they followed the factories into nearly every commercial center. In the United States it took nearly a century of legislation to abolish this custom, and many states succeeded only by making a law that laborers were to be paid in cash or by checks and not by certificates from the stores.

13. In treating of the social and economic abuses in England, especially of the trafficking in the lives of children, we must not forget that legislation for the improvement of conditions was something so new that it took considerable time for Parliament to formulate any definite laws to correct the evils. Among the first to interest themselves in these reforms was Sir Robert Peel, himself a mill owner and a witness of the terrible abuses incident to child labor. Robert Owen was so shocked by the conditions that he turned to the extreme ranks of communism and sought to cure the evil by establishing communistic committees both in England and in the United States; but his dreams were in no way realized, for he lived to witness many attempts, along lines which

he had planned, end futilely, and his communistic ideas gradually abandoned by his followers.

However, real legislation made steady progress, beginning with an act in 1802 for the preservation of the health and morals of apprentices in the cotton mills of England. This act of Parliament reduced the working days to twelve hours. It was difficult to enforce, owing to the cupidity of the operators, who seemed bent on making vast fortunes at the sacrifice of human lives. By a false interpretation of the law those children who lived close to the mill and were under the supervision of their parents were often forced to work sixteen hours a day. Since parents could not get work and lived on the wages of their children, in many cases they acquiesced in this brutal system.

14. In 1819 another act was passed by Parliament forbidding employers to hire children under nine years of age, and insisting on the twelve-hour limit; but again, by some lax interpretation, the children were allowed and often forced to work thirteen and a half or fourteen hours a day. In 1831 another law was passed forbidding night work in certain factories to persons under twenty-one years of age. Two years later the law was fully extended to all factories; children from nine to thirteen were limited to forty-eight hours a week, and those from thirteen to eighteen could not work more than sixty-eight hours a week.

It was at this early time that we have the first provision for factory inspectors, whose duty it was to look after the health of the children, and to see that some means of education was provided for them in their leisure hours. In 1847 the hours of women and children were reduced to ten, and were limited from five-thirty in the morning to eight-thirty in the evening. In 1850 the working day extended by law from six o'clock in the

morning until six in the evening. It was only in 1874 that the minimum age for those working in factories was raised to ten years. In these various legislative enactments we can see that it required three-quarters of a century to correct the evils that arose with the invention of machinery.

15. It does not come within the scope of this work to trace the influence of European conditions upon social life in the United States; but we shall briefly point out how many of our problems were necessarily connected with those of the Old World. Conscious of her commercial supremacy, England did everything in her power to hold the factories within her own borders. Parliament enacted laws against the exportation of machinery, and endeavored to prevent the shipping of all blocks, pictures, plates, tools, engines, and other equipment for the manufacturing of cotton goods. The prize was so tempting, however, that individuals succeeded in frustrating all legislation. We owe the beginning of our system largely to Samuel Slater, who as a boy had worked in one of the Arkwright mills, and had mastered every detail of the process. Coming to New York in 1789, he made arrangements with promoters to construct machinery according to the Arkwright plans, and in less than two years he started a mill with seventy-two spindles. In the beginning of the next century Francis Lowell visited England and inspected many of the mills, and brought back in his retentive memory the plans of the machinery which he had carefully observed; and in 1814, with the aid of friends, he erected a cotton factory at Waltham, Massachusetts, with seventeen hundred spindles. He even outdid his rivals in England; and his factory was the first to take the raw material and turn out the finished product all under one roof.

16. With the introduction of machinery into this country there came the difficulties of housing, wages, employment, child labor, and other economic and social problems. The simple ways of the past began to yield to the complex questions of our modern life. However, there is one aspect which did not change and cannot change, namely, the relationship between man's social life and his spiritual life and destiny. We have not reached, nor shall we reach, a period in the history of a nation when the supernatural element in man may be discarded or ignored. Whether man lives by the simpler rules of former generations, or whether he faces the intricate realities of a modern metropolis; whether he tills the fields of his farm, or elbows his way through the crowded thoroughfares of our twentieth-century cities; whether he exchanges the output of his toil for other commodities which he needs, or utilizes the latest methods of banking systems; whatever he does or wherever he lives, he still is a man — a man with a soul, and with a higher destiny than bartering and hoarding or seeking for the comforts of life. And being such, he cannot separate the spiritual that is in him from the physical without injury to what is highest and best. If the student has learned this true philosophy of life he has not studied social history in vain.

Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Consult some book of economics for an account of the Manchester School of Economics.
2. May economics ignore the teaching of religion?
3. Collect facts in regard to the lives of James Hargreaves, Sir Richard Arkwright, and Samuel Crompton.
4. Were social evils necessarily connected with the invention of machinery?
5. What labor troubles arose when self-binders were introduced into the wheat fields of the Middle West of the United States?

6. Give instances of child labor in the United States and in your own community.

7. Are you in favor of a constitutional amendment to regulate child labor in the United States?

8. Discuss this topic: The difficulty of correcting a social evil as studied in the light of child labor and of labor legislation.

9. Investigate the cause of the great Pullman strike, and discover whether or not the Cottage System was partly the cause of the discontent of the workmen.

10. Do you know of any present-day social evils connected with the Cottage System?

11. When coal, iron, and copper mines are far removed from any community would not the Cottage System be helpful, if not necessary?

12. The Truck System was eliminated in the United States by the enactment of laws. Collect some facts in regard to this legislation.

13. The labor troubles in England (1770-1800) were largely due to a lack of religious principles among the operators. Can you trace any of the present-day troubles to the same cause?

14. What social problems arose in the United States owing to the factory system?

15. Let different members of the class prepare papers on Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Malthus; also on Samuel Slater, Francis Lowell, and Eli Whitney.

16. Can we dispense with religious principles in solving the social problems of our time?

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